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## Judging presidents needs more debate, says Calvin scholar

**Nathan VanderKlippe**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—For those who wander in Christian circles, the question "Is the American presidency currently in a moral

crisis?" is more a rhetorical than an inquisitive one. Yet for many intellectuals who do not walk these same religious paths, the question is often answered in much the

same fashion: "Yes."

The U.S. presidency was the topic of a recent lecture delivered by Ronald Wells, a Calvin College history professor of 30 years, a current editor of the *Phi Dei Historia* journal and head of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship. Wells spoke to about 80 people on "Presidents as Political and Moral Leaders" on February 4 as part of the ongoing Noontime Series sponsored by the Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning.

Wells observed that we human beings "are fascinated by power," but that for people with a Reformed worldview (his audience members), it is especially necessary "to look at politics and be fascinated by it and participate in it." In a speech interspersed with anecdotes and flashes of humor, Wells

explained one form of political participation in which he himself is engaged.

### Survey on leadership

Over the last 50 years five surveys were completed which rated the presidents as moral leaders. These studies were based on Franklin Roosevelt's words that the U.S. presidency is not one merely of political leadership, but is also about moral leadership. In the surveys, 40 scholars, the "talking heads" on television, as Wells called them, were asked to rate the presidents based on their effectiveness as both political and moral leaders.

Of these surveys, two were conducted by the former historian Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. in 1948 and 1962; two were completed by

Wells himself in 1977 — one in the U.K. and one with strictly Christian historians as poll subjects; and one by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. in 1997.

These surveys, then, offer an interplay of three diverse variables: a 50-year time span; intercontinental geography; and vastly differing religious bases among respondents. That being the case, one would naturally expect to find diverse results.

This, however, was not the case, as Wells pointed out.

Scanning the results of the five surveys, which Wells neatly put in parallel columns on a sheet he handed out to those in attendance, Abraham Lincoln was "unassailably" at the top, holding the number one position in all five surveys.

See **WHAT MORAL** page 3...



Bill Clinton (centre), surrounded by four of his presidential predecessors (clockwise from top left): Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Richard Nixon and Franklin Roosevelt.

## Christian teacher works with Sikh and Muslim schools

**Alan Doerksen**

SURREY, B.C. — As a Christian teacher, Susan Saffold has carved out a unique career for herself by helping to start up both a Sikh school and a Muslim school in lower mainland British Columbia.

Although Saffold had previously applied to work with Christian schools, she says, "It always seemed that the door was closing." But she believes God has opened up opportunities for her to work at Muslim and Sikh schools.

Recently, Saffold worked for

nine years as the vice-principal of Dashmesh Punjabi School — a Sikh school in Abbotsford, B.C. She started working at the school in its early stages and helped to get it started in 1986.

At the Sikh school, Saffold had "lots of opportunities" to share her faith with students. "Each year, I would share the Christmas story," she explains. "I wasn't doing anything that offended." She also showed the *Jesus* video at the school, and explained the meaning of Easter.

See **TEACHER** page 2... Susan Saffold



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## News

# Teacher finds opportunities to share faith

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Saffold taught academic subjects, not religion, at the Sikh school. "They had their own religion teachers," she says.

Dalip Singh Gill, principal of Dashmesh Punjabi School, says, "Generally, in the class, we don't speak about faith." But he observes, "In our morning assemblies, we have respect for all religions."

Several other Christian teachers have worked at the Sikh school, says Gill, who believes it is a good thing for members of different faiths to work together.

## Sensing God's leading

Saffold left the Sikh school due to health problems. "I got a chemical insensitivity," she explains.

"The doctor advised I not stay there anymore."

Saffold felt a need to start a Christian school. But soon afterward she saw an advertisement for a Muslim school that needed a teacher. After she prayed and considered the situation, she says, "I felt God was leading me to this Muslim school."

The Muslim school she contacted was based in Richmond, B.C., but was in the process of setting up a new school in Surrey — Surrey Muslim School. "They asked me to do the educational part of setting up," she says. Saffold had good credentials and knew about such things as how to apply for grants.

"I asked the Lord to use it as an opportunity to share," says

Saffold. "I wanted to be somewhere I could share Christ."

But one difference from the Sikh school was that Saffold could not share her faith openly at the Muslim school. "You can't talk about Christmas or Easter... I can't even have a birthday in my class," she notes. "Even if you say, 'Christmas,' the kids say 'Harran,' which means 'that is forbidden.'"

Despite such restrictions, Saffold has found opportunities to discuss faith issues with students and staff. When talking with staff "on a friendship basis, I can talk to them and find out where they are."

She also tells of one student who was upset because he couldn't speak openly about Christmas at school. The boy's mother is Christian and his father is Muslim.

Saffold spoke with him privately one day and told him she was a Christian. She suggested that he talk more with his mother about Christmas. Later on, that student spoke to the class for "Show and Tell" about his experience going to the Kid's Zone, a Saturday children's program at a church in Surrey.

In that context, he was able to speak about how he spent his Christmas holidays. He even invited his fellow students to come with him to the Kid's Zone. This turned out to be a learning experience for Saffold in how Christians can share faith in such a setting.

Adam Buksh, the manager of Surrey Muslim School, describes Saffold as "very understanding and mature." He explains that

Saffold teaches "the ABC side" of kindergarten classes, while another staff member teaches religion (Islam).

The Muslim school, which started classes last September, has eight teachers and one assistant teacher. All staff members except Saffold are Muslims, says Buksh.

Buksh sees no problem with having a Christian teacher on staff. "Christianity and Islam go hand in hand," he says. "Religion is to keep peace," not to start wars.

Saffold is a member of an Evangelical Free Church in Aldergrove, B.C. Her husband is executive vice-president of Trinity Western University, in Langley, B.C. She is the only Christian teacher she knows of who has worked for a Sikh or Muslim school.

# Colson ministry continues to provide hope behind bars

RESTON, Va. (religiontoday.com) — Prison Fellowship Ministries, the 20-year-old organization founded by Watergate felon-turned evangelist Chuck Colson, continues to flourish, reaching more prisoners than ever.

Ministry volunteers led 18,000 seminars in prisons last year, presenting the gospel through lectures, skits, small-group discussions and music. Topics include surviving in prison, parenting, and getting and keeping a job. There are more than 1,400 ongoing Bible studies in prisons across the United States and Canada.

Evangelistic campaigns inside prisons, called Starting Line, feature entertainment with a gospel presentation. About 18,000 prisoners in 60 institutions heard the presentations last year. Copies of *Inside Journal*, a bimonthly newspaper targeted to non-Christians,



Charles "Chuck" Colson

were shipped by request to 1,858 institutions last year, including every federal and state prison in the U.S., some in Canada, and a number of jails, military brigades, and juvenile detention centres. Publishing companies, book distributors and individual donors provided several thousand Bibles to prisoners and chaplains.

## Applying gospel teachings

In a new approach that has been praised by a variety of media, Prison Fellowship took charge of a unit at a minimum-security prison in Katy, Texas, 35 miles from Houston, running Bible-based activities for up to 200 voluntary participants. The InnerChange Freedom Initiative runs 18-month sessions that apply teachings of the gospels to provide inmates with the self-esteem, moral framework, and life skills needed to be productive citizens.

Participants give up television and about half their recreational hours and forgo a larger two-man cell for a 5-by-7-foot cubicle in an InnerChange communal dorm. Days begin at 5:30 a.m. and include a morning devotional, assigned work or study toward a high school diploma, and three hours of Bible study and Scripture-based life-skills classes such as balancing a chequebook and improving social skills.

After six months, nonviolent offenders can devote afternoons to community-service work. Evenings are reserved for small-group discussions with crime victims, and "family nights" at which inmates rebuild their family relationships.

Each inmate is paired with a Christian role model in the outside world to trust and confide in. The volunteer mentors, who live in the communities where the inmates will be paroled, visit the inmates in prison and remain involved with them for at least six months after release, providing a welcome to a congregation and often helping find a job and housing.

State prison agencies in Kansas and Iowa are negotiating to implement InnerChange programs by the end of 1999. Alan Terwilliger, Prison Fellowship senior vice-president, told *Religion Today*.

Prison Fellowship also runs the Angel Tree program, which in 1997 provided Christmas gifts for 460,615 children of inmates.

Gifts were purchased and wrapped by members of 14,826 churches, and prisoners wrote

cards with the gifts, assuring the child that he or she misses them and sends love. Volunteers maintain year-round contact with about 20 per cent of the children through birthday parties, home visits, vacation Bible school or summer camps.

## Owes much to prayer

Colson airs a daily radio program called "BreakPoint" on 425 stations reaching about five million people, the ministry says.

It is also available online. In addition, there are outreaches to crime victims through the Prison Fellowship subsidiary Neighbors Who Care.

Adults or children who have been harmed by violent or property crimes often are full of fear, anger or desperation, ministry officials say. About 500 church-based volunteers for Neighbors Who Care help with cleanup, document replacement, emergency food or funds, emotional support and prayer and spiritual aid.

Efforts are under way to reform criminal justice systems through the Justice Fellowship subsidiary. In 1998 this included, for example, helping Pennsylvania and South Carolina create and fund systems to collect and distribute restitution from offenders to their victims.

Prison Fellowship has about 200,000 volunteers who do everything from minister in prisons to write thank-you letters, a ministry representative told *Religion Today*. That number increases to 800,000 when Angel Tree volunteers are included.

Prison Fellowship's ministries in the United States and Canada are two of 83 around the world. New ministries were chartered last year in Argentina, Finland, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Thailand, and the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Georgia.

Short-term assistance teams of volunteers helped construct buildings, provide medical and dental care, and gave business advice to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families in Zambia, Ecuador, Nepal, Peru and Namibia. More than 350 small-business loans were made to ex-prisoners through a micro-enterprise lending program operating in the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Peru.

The ministry, which is based in Reston, Va., owes much to prayer, its leaders say. About 1,100 people are committed to praying regularly for its needs, especially those detailed in a monthly prayer letter. Many Prison Fellowship staff members participate in scheduled days of prayer and fasting, and set aside five minutes daily at noon to pray for ministry needs.

Prisoners as well as church members from a number of congregations also pray.

## Internet links to check out:

<http://www.prisonfellowship.org/>  
<http://www.angeltree.org/>  
<http://www.breakpoint.org/>  
<http://www.neighborswhocare.org/>  
<http://www.justicefellowship.org/>  
<http://www.prisonfellowshipintl.org/>

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Editor



## News/Environment

# What moral standards apply to presidents?

... continued from page 1

Many other similarities also appeared. For example, President (Warren G.) Harding took the last position on four of the five; Richard Nixon ranked in the bottom three on all three surveys taken after his terms as president; George Washington placed very near the top on all five.

In fact, the surveys, which were

divided into the categories "Great," "Successful," "Competent," "Unsuccessful" and "Failure," were remarkably similar and, observed Wells, "That's the stunning part."

## What standards?

Wells noted that out of this similarity, problems begin to arise when the question "What exactly

is the moral standard?" is raised. He cited Thomas Jefferson as an example. "Now that we know fairly clearly that Mr. Jefferson had children outside of marriage by his slave, does our opinion of him change?" [Recent DNA tests have proven that Jefferson, while a widower, had a son with his slave, Sally Hemings.]

He also referred to President

Nixon, who was put in last place in the 1997 poll. Although he opened up China, damped down the Vietnam War and worked with the Middle East, "the scholars are not going to forgive Nixon," Wells said, causing him to question, "Is Watergate going to damn him forever?"

Using the same reasoning, Wells also alluded to the Clinton administration, pondering what moral standards apply to "one whose policies are great but whose private life is cold."

## Americans lie about it

Turning briefly from the question of personal moral standards, Wells went on to field questions from the audience, in the process giving his opinions on several issues.

Questioned about the current Clinton administration, Wells created a distinction between the affairs had by European leaders and those had by American presidents,

remarking that "[the Europeans] don't lie about their affairs."

Wells also pronounced his judgment that "these are not impeachable offenses," a statement which he said was backed by "any reputable scholar."

In his closing remarks, Wells looked once more at the issue of morality in the presidency. "We need to expand and broaden and deepen 'the character issue,'" he said. Wells seemed to say that the issue of personal and moral character in the presidency is one that needs to be debated and discussed by those whose Reformed worldview has encouraged a transforming interest in politics.

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## Tithing the earth in Canada

Reading the papers today reminds me of the advice Aslan gave the children in the C.S. Lewis tales *The Chronicles of Narnia*. We are in the midst of great events, yet it is always difficult for people inside the story to recognize that.

The press of human demand on ecosystem services is larger now than ever in history. Future generations will judge us by the action we take, or fail to take, today while there's still some chance to do so.

Some observers suggest that there will never again be a time when samples of the 400 or so distinct ecosystems in Canada can be preserved. And here is the irony: so few of us even know that such decisions are being made, much less whether those decisions might be good or ill.

In Alberta it is called "Special Places 2000," in Ontario, "Lands for Life." The idea in these and other parts of Canada is to complete an ambitious plan of land preservation. The goal is to protect a sample of each of the country's terrestrial natural regions by the year 2000. Fully protecting marine areas will follow over the next decade.

Ambitious? Well, yes. This widely supported effort got off to an excellent start a decade ago. So, now where are we? Will we make our lofty goals?

## Everyone supports biodiversity?

The Endangered Spaces Campaign was first launched by the World Wildlife Fund (the Panda logo folks) in September 1989. By Christmas 1993 the federal and provincial parks and wildlife ministers had signed a House of Commons Statement of Commitment. With this bold move Canada led the way in bio-diversity conservation. Canada was the first industrial nation to sign the UN Convention on Bio-diversity. The Endangered Spaces campaign would help us meet the goals of the bio-diversity convention — conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fairness in sharing the benefits of nature's genetic resources.

Now as we are closing in on the millennium many of these government programs are winding down. But just at the moment when the difficult final decisions are being made, the public seems to have lost interest in the environment. It hardly registered on the Macleans/CBC year-end opinion

## Creation waits...



John Wood

poll as an area of concern.

The reports I get from Christians in environmental organizations working on these questions tell another story. They say that *now* is the crucial time to act. But in Alberta, the Special Places program is officially over. Based on the number of environmental groups which have pulled out of the process here it may be hard to call it a success. The Lands for Life process is likewise at a crucial stage. The decision will be taken any day now on which of the many recommendations to accept. A total of almost 40 million hectares of public land is set to be assigned a use category. Will Ontario designate as much as 12 per cent of this land to conservation? Or will we find it impossible to even title the land?

## Ecological tithing works

In the South Pacific researchers have found that ecological tithing helps sustain local fisheries. When as little as 10 per cent of coral reef habitat is placed in an ecological reserve it can provide reproductive stocks for an entire island.

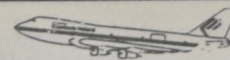
The lessons here are old ones now adapted to modern activities. The Bible is clear. We cannot relentlessly press the creation. The challenge for Canadians is to set aside a representative sample of ecosystems. Some suggest that as little as 12 per cent of our land base will be enough. We are less than halfway to that goal with one year to go in the campaign. I cannot see the end of this story yet. I wonder how people will speak of this generation in years to come. Were we rich enough to act, or so rich that we failed the stewardship test?

You can take a hand in land decisions in your area by contacting your provincial or federal environment agency. Or contact the World Wildlife Fund and ask about Endangered Spaces.

*Dr. John R. Wood is associate professor of biology and environmental studies at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alta.*

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## Editorial

# A few bricks short of a healthy society

Letters from a senior to a junior editor (7)

## My Dearest Wordgood:

This is not meant to be a lamentation on the theme: "What is this world coming to?" I wouldn't do that to you, mainly because I know the answer: "To hell in a handbasket." Not really. That's a pessimistic, stock answer which a cynical person might throw off in a moment of disgust. Of course, this world is headed for judgment. But that is not new. This world has been headed for judgment ever since Adam and Eve took that fatal bite.

If I am right, what is new about our present world, especially in the West, is that at no time in history has there been such a sharp and quick decline in moral standards and social adhesion as in my lifetime. Let me illustrate this point with a quote from *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* by William Bennett, U.S. Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration.

In 1940, teachers identified the following as the top problems in U.S. public schools: "Talking out of turn, chewing gum, making noise, running in the halls, cutting in line, dress-code infractions and littering.... When asked the same question in 1990, teachers identified drug abuse, alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery and assault." Shocking, isn't it? The title of the book correctly suggests that this finding is a leading cultural indicator. There are others.

An article in a 1995 issue of the *Globe and Mail* states that "in the '90s there are 15 times the divorces there were in the '50s. The conventional wisdom was that unhappy marriages should remain intact for the sake of the children, writes Margaret Philip. That idea went out the window in the '70s with the belief that children would be happier if the warring spouses separated. Fortunately, social scientists are coming back from that belief. But the damage has been done. There is a growing pile of research that shows that children of parents who are separated, divorced or never married are at a far greater risk of experiencing depression, teenage pregnancy, dropping out of school or collecting welfare. Teachers are reporting more learning disabilities than ever before.

I feel bad about these things for your sake, Wordgood, and for the sake of your contemporaries and their children. It would be highly inappropriate of me were I to blame your generation for this. Instead of saying "What is this world coming to?" I should say, "Where has my generation gone wrong in steering this world in the direction it is currently going?" It's *my* generation, not yours, that is to blame for this disaster that primarily affects our children.



cel of communist government."

But what Mr. Lee does not like is the expansion of the individual's right to behave or misbehave at the expense of an orderly society. He finds parts of the Western (especially American) system totally unacceptable: "Guns, drugs, violent crime, vagrancy, unbecoming behavior in public — in sum the breakdown of civil society."

A little later in the interview, Mr. Lee says: "Man needs a certain moral sense of right and wrong. There is such a thing as evil and it is not the result of being a victim of society. You are just an evil man, prone to do evil things, and you have to be stopped from doing them."

"Westerners have abandoned an ethical basis for society, believing all problems are solvable by a good government, which we in the East never believed possible."

I don't know Mr. Lee's religious background, but he makes an awful lot of sense to me. He suggests that governments fail when they try to do what traditionally extended families did: look after each other and hold each other accountable.

What have we done?

## What have we done?

What I like about Mr. Lee's observations is that he recognizes that evil is inherent in us and that, unless we allow a moral standard to regulate our conduct, we are doomed as a society. The disturbing thing is that much of what Mr. Lee propagates is part of the West's heritage. As such it is not an Eastern way of thinking. Many of my generation remember the kind of society he espouses.

What has happened to us? Rebellion against God and his commandments — that's what has happened to us, Wordgood. What has happened is that we have declared ourselves both good and autonomous. The two go hand in hand. Once you believe the lie that we are basically good people, then the next step follows — we should be rulers over our own lives. We are not accountable to anyone but our "good" selves. Of course, bad things happen to good people, things like rape, abuse, robberies, making us victims of ... what? Other good people? It doesn't make sense. If we are all good, where does evil come from?

The West has made a spiritual mistake of gigantic proportions. It has denied and continues to deny the total depravity of humankind. If there is anything I want you to stress, Wordgood, it is *that* truth. The acknowledgement that "the fall has so poisoned our nature that we are born sinners — corrupt from conception on" (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Lord's Day 3) is a crucial building block for a healthy society. Once you have that one wrong, the rest of your building cannot stand.

Of course, you need more than an awareness of depravity. You need to be redeemed from it. That's the second building block. Question 8 in Lord's Day 3: "But are we so corrupt that we are totally unable to do any good and inclined toward evil?" Answer: "Yes, unless we are born again, by the Spirit of God." When was the last time you saw that formula in a sociology book?

Affectionately yours,  
Truetype

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## A wide variety of causes

It's difficult to pin down how and why this breakdown of morals and ethical behavior took place. Some people blame the political left for allowing a permissive society to come about by shifting from personal responsibility to state responsibility. But that's simplistic thinking. The political right has done as much damage by allowing corporations to grow beyond the point at which they can be held accountable for what they are doing to workers, clients and the environment.

Besides, pointing fingers at the kind of governments we have is like blaming the snow for the colder weather.

David Popenoe of Rutgers University sees a broader picture of blame when he cites the following as causes for decline: "Failing families, rising crime, declining interpersonal trust, growing personal and corporate greed, deteriorating societies and increasing confusion over moral issues as dimensions of social decline" (*Globe and Mail*, Feb. 19, 1994). I like what Popenoe says, but he is still talking more about symptoms than causes.

## The Asian view

Sometimes you have to go outside of your self and your society, Wordgood, to find more helpful answers. One such answer I found in an interview by editor Fareed Zakaria with Lee Kuan Yew, former prime minister of Singapore (*Globe and Mail*, March 21, 1994).

Now retired, Mr. Lee has become somewhat of a critic of the Western way of doing things. There is much he admires in Western society: "The free, easy and open relations between people regardless of social status, ethnicity or religion.... A certain openness in argument about what is good or bad for society; the accountability of public officials; none of the secrecy and terror that's part and par-



## Letters

## We must not give up on the reformational vision

The question: "Where's the Passion of Generation X?" (CC, Jan. 11) reminded me of a comment by the late Reformed theologian Dr. Gordon Spykman made perhaps 25 to 30 years ago. Were it not for the post-World War II wave of Dutch immigration, he said, the Christian Reformed Church would have already gone fundamentalist. He was using the latter term in a theological and historical, not in a deprecatory, sense.

From 1966 to 1976 there was a nucleus of persons here in western Michigan interested in the thought of Dutch statesman and

theologian Abraham Kuyper, led by men like Spykman and Reformed Ecumenical Council head Dr. Paul Schrottenboer, and augmented by some knowledgeable immigrants.

### Associates are crucial

We met at least monthly as a chapter of what was then the Association for Advanced Christian Studies and the Association for Public Justice. We organized conferences and seminars and wrote position papers. During "Key 73," an evangelical movement organized by Dr. James Kennedy of Florida.

our manual, "Christian Witness In Politics," was distributed in large numbers, mostly to non-CRC groups.

In those days, the teachers among us, when attending the conference of the Christian College Coalition organized by reformational scholar, Pete Steen in Pittsburgh, could always identify by their reformational worldview those students who studied under [still other reformational scholars such as] Calvin Seerveld at Trinity, near Chicago; John Vander Stelt at Dordt College in northwest Iowa; and H. Evan Runner at Calvin College here in Michigan. And Jim Skillen, who for some years has headed the Center for Public Justice in Washington, D.C., always drew the largest attendance for his lectures at those Pittsburgh conferences.

Today Drs. Spykman and Schrottenboer have gone to their eternal reward. Other members of our local reformational nucleus have grown bone weary and burned out in seemingly futile attempts to break through the insularity of western Michigan pietism.

As the then editor of *The Banner*, the CRC's official publication, once told our classical elders fellowship, western Michigan is the most blase region in the Christian Reformed Church.

Meanwhile, where have all those good young reformational thinkers who were trained at Calvin, Dordt and Trinity gone? Sometimes in the American evangelical milieu that training regrettably just evaporates when not upheld and strengthened by association with like-minded people.

I know a very prominent person in the CRC who once asked this skeptical question: What is a Christian perspective on anything, and what difference would it make? Today this person is promoting the view that the mind of Christ should permeate every area of life. That conversion, I'm sure, came because of the witness of his associates. We need to maintain such communal thinking and doing.

Arthur Davies  
Holland, Michigan

## Jubilee 2000: is this a second chance?

Sunday morning, Jan. 31, 1999. I am sitting at the table reading the January 25 issue of CC. Ah! Jubilee 2000 is under discussion. As I read, I begin to feel very uncomfortable. The scene of last Sunday comes to mind, guilt feelings and all.

I was sitting at this very same table eating breakfast. I felt good because this was Sunday — the Lord's day. Plus, I was to host the guest preacher for the day, something I looked forward to with great anticipation.

As I looked out of the window my eyes caught sight of a young woman on the sidewalk pulling a light, steel-framed cart, a few items, including something plastic, showed through the wire mesh. She walked very slowly. She looked intently at every house.

My heart skipped a beat. Oh no! Is she looking for an invitation to breakfast? On any other day I would have rushed out and called her in, but not this day. I wasn't dressed yet. I wanted to, but I had a host of excuses. My mind said, "Hurry up, get dressed and call her in." By the time I reluctantly got up she had disappeared. Good! I was off the hook.

I sat down again, but wouldn't you know it, she was coming back in the same slow manner. She even sat down on the snow bank across the road from me. I got up again and dragged my feet in the direction of the bedroom to change. I thought, "Oh Lord, do

I have to? But this is *my* day, too. I am going to host the minister. I want to." The I was so very big that I let her go uninvited.

In spite of my unwillingness to be a Good Samaritan, God turned my day into a day of many blessings. But I still felt guilty. To find relief I told the story to my guest, hoping he would come up with a valid excuse for me. He didn't. Instead he reminded me of Hebrews 13:2, "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it." Ouch! Speak of loading burning coals on my conscience. "But," he said, "our God is also a God who gives second chances. You may pray for that."

That was one way out, but my heart still accused me.

This morning, reading the opinions of some strong voices from within the CRC, I wonder. Did we, the Western world collectively, let our first chance go by? How was it that we let the developing countries get so far into debt — even contributing to it, to some extent? Is God now giving us that second chance? Should we stand squarely behind the Jubilee 2000 campaign and support it with all our strength as individuals and churches? Or should we drag our feet and let this opportunity slip by?

Hilda Wielemaker  
Trenton, Ontario

## Bolt doesn't address "macro" issues

Thank you for your January 25 issue on the subject of debt and Jubilee 2000. I read with interest the article discussing reasons why Christian Reformed Church leaders in the U.S. have decided not to endorse Jubilee 2000. Although I can accept some of the questions that these people may have, I was quite disturbed by John Bolt's comment that "a better solution... would be to teach stewardship and basic agriculture to people in developing countries."

First, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) has been doing this well since 1965. While this helps to improve the quality of life for people at the village level, it does little to address the "macro" issue of national and international debt, for which we are partially responsible.

This brings me to my second point.

Dr. Bolt's comment implies that the responsibility of the debt should be placed on the backs of the working poor in these debt-burdened countries, people who already bear the burden of the debt without having had any choice in the matter.

What a convenient way to ignore our responsibility. Whether we like it or not, our spending, investment and political choices have much to do with this debt crisis. Even if we do not believe that, as Christians we are still responsible to see that justice is done for all nations.

My prayer is that we will do all we can to ensure that Jubilee will soon be a reality for our neighbors in the South.

Judy Maan Miedema  
Guelph, Ont.

## We are called to bring justice

I was disillusioned to read in the Jan. 25 CC article, "Canadian, American CRC leaders split over Jubilee 2000," that the "Christian Reformed Church synod will not officially endorse Jubilee 2000, even though individual churches may overture synod about it." As well, Rev. David Feddes' statement, "I'm very leery of preachers turning into political policy makers," surprised me.

Jubilee 2000 is based on the directives for economics that God spelled out in the Old Testament. As Christians, we are all required to be actively involved in the restoration of the systems where injustice occurs. And leaders, by their position of influence have an even greater responsibility and accountability.

Linda Siebenga  
Blackfalds, Alta.

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## Letter/Opinion

# We need not give up on Generation X

In their regular exchange in CC, Elizabeth Salomons and Peter Schuurman address topical questions relevant to 20 and 30-something Christian adults. I'd like to respond to their reflections in the Jan. 11 exchange about support for organizations such as Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ).

Elizabeth and Peter question why Generation Xers and young adults no longer attend meetings such as the CPJ anniversary events which were held across Canada. I'd like to start by noting that support for CPJ (and many other Reformed organizations) is not waning but is becoming more diverse (less solely Christian Reformed-based).

## Focus on issues

CPJ's anniversary events reached out to a certain cross-section of CPJ support community: long-term supporters. Many of these older supporters have developed personal associations with our staff (and particularly with Gerald Vandezande, whose retirement was being commemorated).

In the past, in-person contact through small community meetings and events on topical issues was an important vehicle for establishing links between CPJ's members and staff. We recognize,

however, that an increasing number of our members (notably younger ones) are not interested in these types of meetings.

Moreover, many are less interested in social links with our individual staff than in engagement with the issues on which we work.

This is reflected in the evolving ways in which we connect to more members through e-mail, e-mail list-servers, our internet site, and through efforts to connect more members systematically into our policy analysis and research work through working groups, etc.

This is a commentary not only on changing technologies but on the role and nature of community in our society. In our atomized, individualistic culture, fewer people participate in communal functions such as the traditional topical meetings held by organizations such as CPJ.

## Small support base

Just as important in explaining the small numbers of attendees at these meetings, however, is a lesson I learned from a Christian Reformed Church elder. I think it is pertinent to your discussion. I was attending a classis meeting in southern Ontario seven years ago, making a presentation on CPJ's work. I was extremely discouraged

both by the classical delegates' lack of awareness and interest in CPJ's work for public justice and by the experience of being both the only woman in the room and the only person under 30.

Over lunch, an older delegate, a veteran of many classical meetings (and himself not a supporter of CPJ) reminded me that only a small proportion of Christian Reformed Church members have ever actively supported organizations that seek to express Reformed values and beliefs in different spheres of life. This should not, he reminded me, discourage us from reaching out to that portion of people who believe that the

work of these organizations is vital to our vocation in the world.

His reminder rang true. I am a child of the Christian Reformed Church (though I am no longer a member of it). I grew up in a rural Alberta congregation that prided itself on *not* supporting such organizations. The other Christian Reformed Church in our community supported these "wild causes."

It was through exposure to these organizations via a terrific chaplain at the University of Alberta, Tom Oosterhuis, that I began to learn of the scope of work and vision of CPJ, ICS, CLAC, Christian Farmers and other Reformed organizations. My eyes

were opened in new ways to the relevance of my faith to all of life. The efforts Tom made to expose students such as myself to this Reformed vision changed the course of my career and life decisions.

Similarly, it is through efforts such as yours, Peter (as a chaplain) and Elizabeth (as a writer and journalist who finds innovative ways to share your views and beliefs) that support for organizations such as CPJ finds new homes in the hearts of young adults interested in the connections between faith and life.

Lorraine Land  
CPJ, Toronto

E-mail: lland@yorku.ca

## An American view

# A big stink about Tinky Winky

Doug Trouten

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (EP) — The President of the United States has just avoided removal from office. Civil war continues to rage in the former Yugoslavia. Saddam Hussein continues to rattle his saber. So what issue is at the top of the American news agenda? Tinky Winky. It's hard to open a newspaper or turn on a talk show without hearing a discussion of the sexual preference of the largest of TV's "Teletubbies."

If you haven't seen the Teletubbies, consider yourself fortunate. It's a program designed for the pre-verbal by people who seem to fear that children aren't watching enough television.

To reach that all-important age two-and-under crowd with the message that their lives should revolve around television, the show features fuzzy characters with antennas on their heads and TV sets embedded in their stomachs. Tinky Winky, Laa-Laa, Po and Dipsy wander about their magical land burbling baby talk, and pick up occasional transmissions of educational videos on their built-in TV sets.

## It wasn't Falwell

Why the fuss about Tinky Winky? Well, although Tinky Winky speaks with a boy's voice, he carries a red purse. He's also purple (the "gay pride" color) and has a triangle on his head (the "gay pride" symbol). Taken together, these factors make it easy to conclude that Tinky Winky is meant to be a symbol of homosexuality.

To the casual observer, it would

seem that the whole ruckus about Tinky Winky started when Rev. Jerry Falwell "outed" Tinky Winky as a homosexual. But, as is so often the case, the casual observer is wrong. Although most of the Tinky Winky debate today suggests that it was Falwell who raised the question, Falwell says he has never actually seen or commented on the "Teletubbies."

However, Falwell is the publisher of the *National Liberty Journal*. The senior editor of that magazine, J.M. Smith, called attention to Tinky Winky in a recent issue. But that's not even where it begins. Smith didn't make this up. Tinky Winky became a favorite with homosexual groups last year.

## Others saw it first

Last July *Time* magazine ran an article on transsexuals which identified Tinky Winky as "a boy who carries a red patent-leather purse." *People* magazine noted that "gay men have made the purse-toting Tinky Winky a camp icon." And the *Washington Post* published an editorial categorizing lesbian actress Ellen DeGeneres as "out" and "Tinky Winky, the gay teletubby" as "in."

In fact, the debate over Tinky Winky's sexuality actually goes back to the debut of the TV series in Britain in 1997. So why are questions about Tinky Winky's sexuality the subject of media scrutiny and jokes now, when they've been ignored for two years? What made the difference?

The answer is simple. Tinky Winky's sexuality is on the agenda now because it represents an op-

portunity to mock a prominent conservative Christian like Falwell.

My local newspaper, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, recently devoted three separate items to the Tinky Winky story on the same day. An editorial cartoon portrayed Falwell as the fifth teletubby: "Bigotry Nitwit." The reaction of the *Star Tribune* is typical of what's happened in the nation.

## Righteous indignation

Last year, when gay groups had latched on to Tinky Winky as one of their own, the mainstream media were happy to wink and grin at the cleverness of it all. But as soon as an associate of Jerry Falwell suggests that perhaps parents should be aware of the meanings that gay activists are attaching to ostensibly innocent TV characters, the media is brimming over with righteous indignation.

Here's what Falwell actually had to say about this whole "Teletubbies" ruckus: "Children's minds are our most precious resource and should be treated with care. I encourage parents to stand as informed guardians of the messages communicated to their children through children's programming and not to leave that most important of responsibilities in the hands of others whose motives may be questionable."

The "latest ludicrous pronouncement" from "Bigotry Nitwit" seems to me to be right on the money.

Doug Trouten is director of the Evangelical Press news service.

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## Arts/Media

## Film Review

# A thoroughly modern monarch

Marian Van Til

## Elizabeth

Rated AA. Stars Cate Blanchett, Joseph Fiennes, Richard Attenborough, Geoffrey Rush, Kathy Burke. Written by Michael Hirst. Directed by Shekhar Kapur.

If you're a moviegoer who thinks historical drama can't be exciting, this film will disabuse you of that notion. If a late 16<sup>th</sup> century English royal seems a less-than-promising subject for a rousing late 20<sup>th</sup> century film, consider more carefully that ruler, Elizabeth I:

- \* Daughter of the infamous Henry VIII whose lust for a son to succeed him resulted in his apparent motto towards his successive wives: bed-'em and kill-'em.

- \* Protestant survivor of imprisonment at the hands of her Catholic half-sister (Queen Mary), of bitter and engulfing Protestant/Catholic struggles which divide Britons, of her country's near bankruptcy and weak defenses, of early bad advice from counsellors.

- \* Emerger as a strong and clever leader, and consequently, presider over one of the greatest flowerings of English culture and political power in British history, the "golden age" which became the foundation for Britain's colonial empire.

- \* Famous personality: in a man's world, one of only two monarchs in Britain's long history, the other also a woman (Victoria), to have the era in which she reigned referred to by her name.

- \* "Virgin Queen" who preferred to remain single and childless if that meant the good of her country.

### Religious differences are at the heart

While the broad outlines of the political and religious issues of the time become apparent in the film, this re-telling is not first of all history. But knowing the history is helpful.

Elizabeth, born in 1533, was the daughter of Henry VIII's wife Anne Boleyn (whom he executed for "treason" when Elizabeth was a mere three years old). Henry had, of course, defied the Pope by divorcing Catherine of Aragon, his first wife, because she bore no sons.

Catherine was the mother of Henry's daughter Mary (Tudor), who was raised a Catholic by her mother. Elizabeth, however, was raised a Protestant. Henry finally had one son, Edward, who on his

father's death in 1547 ruled as Edward VI (and was also a Protestant). But Edward died young, having ruled a mere five years.

It was then that his half-sister Mary became queen and embarked



Oil painting: Queen Elizabeth I

on a quest to make Roman Catholicism Britain's state religion. One of "Bloody Mary's" tactics was to persecute and kill Protestants.

But lest any of us Protestants get smug, much Catholic blood was also shed in the process of Elizabeth's establishing the Church of England, and in the subsequent decades and centuries in Britain, sowing the seeds for the bitter and bloody "Irish Troubles," among other things.

This film focuses on the period just previous to Elizabeth's succeeding of Mary to the throne, and on the first few years of her long (45-year) reign.

Thanks to Edward's weak reign and Mary's volatile one, England is in turmoil religiously, socially, politically, and hardly a match for the power of Spain and France.

Elizabeth (Australian Cate Blanchett) is imprisoned by Mary (Kathy Burke) over their divergent religious views, part of an increasingly desperate plot to prevent Elizabeth from ascending the throne upon Mary's death by cancer.

We listen to her advisors'

repeating refrain about marrying a political ally (should he be French? or Spanish?) and, as time goes by, about marrying, period, to produce an heir and stabilize her Kingdom.

The pre-reign Elizabeth is in love with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (Joseph Fiennes) but, as queen, is unwilling to marry him. The historical Elizabeth was apparently cautious in nature and sublimated personal feelings (as all monarchs were supposed to) to what she considered the welfare of her nation — of which we see a startling example in the denouement of the film.

### Securely single

In fact, Elizabeth used her singleness as a political tool: by avoiding marriage to a Protestant she kept her Catholic subjects loyal; by appearing to encourage suitors from Catholic Spain she managed to avert military action against Britain by Spain's Philip II long enough for the new Church of England to gain a strong foothold among Britons.

Elizabeth is painted as a kind of 16<sup>th</sup> century feminist, which in a sense she was. We see her learn to ever more fully trust her own judgment, to flout the conventional wisdom that a queen cannot successfully rule (and England flourish) if she does not marry. We see her begin to emerge as sovereign as any Sovereign who has worn the English crown.

### Multiple metaphors

The film leads to a pivotal and fascinating point-of-no-return in which the gradually more confident Elizabeth takes brutal steps, via her intelligence officer/bodyguard Walsingham, to silence those who would silence her. (Geoffrey Rush of *Shine* fame is eerily effective in the role; Rush finds a way to make us trust the ruthless but utterly loyal Walsingham.)

The filmmakers thus have Elizabeth metaphorically lose her innocence at this early point in her reign. In a final and ironic, multi-layered scene she makes restitution for that loss by metaphorically regaining her "virginity." In a symbolic dying to self, she will, instead, live to England. The price is losing any chance of happiness in

love and offspring.

The accompanying soundtrack quite intentionally contains the opening of Mozart's *Requiem* (poignantly effective, if anachronistic). Simultaneously — the irony — Elizabeth becomes a Madonna figure for her Protestant subjects for whom there had been a vacuum when their new faith required that they relinquish devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Thus begins (according to this film, anyway) the Elizabethan Age, the long and powerful reign

apparently thinks that for modern young film audiences, "history" goes down better with an opener which features a burning-at-the-stake (three Protestants meet their Maker — or not, depending on whose side you're on), medieval torture (a treasonous Roman priest has served the Pope rather than the Queen) and assorted stabbings, beheadings and pikeings (ring leaders of the Queen's enemies get their just deserts).

The acting here is uniformly excellent. Cate Blanchett in the title



Joseph Fiennes and Cate Blanchett in Elizabeth.

of the Virgin Queen.

### More irony

This is Indian director Shekhar Kapur's first film in English (more irony: that a man from a country which was "the jewel in the crown" of the vast British Empire should be making, or want to make, a film about a ruler from the former subjugator of his country).

Kapur films as if this were an action-adventure movie, with frenetic camera movements, and bright light and gorgeous, gaudy costumes contrasting with the shadowy stone of palace and church. There is a surprising amount of "action," and a fairly high quotient of violence. He

role is particularly captivating in her portrayal of Elizabeth's evolution from carefree princess to convincing Queen.

For Christian viewers the film presents disturbing yet compelling glimpses into the history of bloody Protestant/Catholic conflict. Kapur is fairly evenhanded, though the Catholics come off as the most doctrinally maniacal. Both sides, however, truly believe that a ruler from "the other side" would mean disaster for their country. On each side we see devout, conscience-driven people; and on each side, remorseless fanatics.

Though *Elizabeth* is entertainment, it also provides substantial food for thought.

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## Church

# E-mail group helps men deal with addictions, shame

HOMEWORTH, Ohio (religiontoday.com)—Some Christian men have a secret they're too ashamed to tell anyone about. It's destroying them, their homes, even their churches.

The secret is their involvement in pornography or homosexuality, and it is more common among Christian men, including "a large number of clergy," than people think, says Bruce Adams. He runs an unusual e-mail discussion group in which professed Christian men who are addicted to sexual sins share their struggles and victories.

"Pornography has tentacles that reach deep within the bowels of today's churches regardless of what name is above the door," Adams told *Religion Today*. Those involved fear exposure and ridicule, and may have no one to confide in. He knows "horror stories" about men who have trusted another person with their secret sin and have been exposed.

Three hundred Christian men from the United States and several foreign countries participate in the non-denominational group, which Adams helps run out of his residence in Homeworth, Ohio. To join the group's confidential e-mail list, click on the Internet site.

"This is a totally peer-counsel ministry as those who are further

along in the recovery process share their experiences with those not as far along," Adams said. "Some who have been freed totally from sexual sin and from their former sexual addictions to pornography and/or homosexuality have chosen to remain to give godly counsel to those still bound in those areas. I am one of these."

About 30 to 50 people post messages each day, and others respond by exhorting or encouraging them, telling what God has taught them about a particular sin. Some testimonies also are listed on the group's site.

## Freed when they're ready

All the counselors are volunteers. "Our testimony is unprofessional to some, but we cannot deny the results the Lord has given in our midst," Adams said. "Some may have said we are like the blind leading the blind...but if the blind lead the blind to Jesus, can he not heal them both?"

"The Lord is working in our midst as men apply themselves to his Word. I've seen it work. You can't tell me it doesn't. I've lived it."

At least 10 men involved in homosexuality have given up the lifestyle and several nominal Christians each month give their life to Christ, Adams said. Some are healed mentally or physically, and

numerous marriages have been saved. A free Bible study called "How To Get Free and Stay Free" is available by e-mail.

Small groups meet face-to-face in Phoenix, Arizona, in Spokane, Washington, and in Homeworth, Ohio, near Canton. The ultimate goal is to help men involved in sexual sins reach the point where they can find counseling and accountability in a local church.

As he sees God work, Adams gains boldness in his counseling, which he began after his own recovery in 1997, he said.

Peer counselors have to be careful that they do not fall into the sins of those they counsel, Adams said. "The enemy [Satan] gets ruffled and wants to put their problems on you." The counselors have achieved a measure of recovery and are less susceptible, but "it doesn't insulate them." They sometimes take a break from the counseling to bolster their spiritual resources.

Adams, 50, who has been teaching and preaching for 15 years, receives no funding for the online ministry, which is spreading by word-of-mouth, increasing from 50 men in less than two years.

He and his wife care for foster children, including those who are handicapped, ill or addicted to drugs, for which they receive small government compensation. Ten

children ages 2 to 10 live with them, as does Adams' mother-in-law, who has Alzheimer's disease, and a 20-year-old daughter. Adams helps make ends meet by painting and remodeling.

Men are set free from sexual sin "when they are ready," Adams said. "Then the deliverance comes. It is instantaneous. It's only a prayer away." After that, they can live victoriously as they conquer the "baggage" remaining from

their sins and God trains them to handle temptations. "I call that a miracle," he said.

Other Christian groups that help people escape addictions include Freedom in Christ Ministries and Celebrate Recovery.

Check out these web links:  
<http://www.geocities.com/newlifem>  
<http://www.ficm.org/>  
<http://www.restorationdepot.org/recovery/>

## Small-town Ontario CRC celebrates 50 years of worship



An early photograph of Bloomfield Christian Reformed Church.

### Marian Van Til, with files from Henry Huiskamp

BLOOMFIELD, Ont. — On March 27, 1999, the Christian Reformed Church of Bloomfield, Ont., will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its organization as part of the denomination's then Classis Grand Rapids (Michigan).

In 1949, its first official year, the fledgling congregation bought the Quaker meeting house in Bloomfield in which it had been worshipping since the previous year.

Bloomfield Christian Reformed Church's first pastor was a Rev. Andre who had lived in nearby Picton as a missionary sponsored by CRC Home Missions.

In 1954 the congregation took a new leap forward: the church was incorporated and renamed Bethany in reference to the small village near Jerusalem which was the home of Jesus' friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

In 1977 the congregation saw its last service in the Dutch language. As the decade progressed, Bethany outgrew the old Quaker church, which was torn down in 1962. The old church was replaced with a new, bigger building. That building, in turn, was enlarged in 1991. Today the Bethany congregation consists of about 100 families.

"We have a good relationship with other churches in our community," says member Henry Huiskamp, "and we all work together to spread the Word of God. Bethany, with its Calvinistic principles and teachings, has become one of the pillars in our community."

The congregation hopes to wait till this summer to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

## 1998 saw 37 Catholics known martyred for their faith

ROME (Compass)—The Vatican revealed the names of 37 Catholic missionaries killed for their faith in 1998. Published in the January edition of the *Fides* news agency, the article stressed these were only the tip of the iceberg.

"There are a host of others, hundreds of thousands (if not millions) in Sudan, Congo, Rwanda, Guatemala, Colombia, whose sacrifice is the same, but remains untold."

The list of martyrs highlighted the world's persecution trouble

spots. Twenty-four of the total came from Africa, with Congo and Rwanda the highest with nine martyrs each. Eight came from Latin America, three from the Middle East (Yemen) and two from Asia (India). The Roman Catholic Church defines a martyr as anyone who witnesses to their faith "through the ultimate and radical offering of their life." All on the list were priests or nuns.

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## Church

# Jewish evangelist says Israel becoming more open to Jesus



In the dry Negev desert, irrigation makes the desert bloom at a kibbutz (collective community). Interest in Jesus is also starting to grow in Israel.

JAFFA, Israel (EP) — When Jacob Damkani preaches Jesus in the streets of Israel, he understands the people to whom he's talking.

A native-born Israeli, Damkani was raised in an orthodox Sephardic community of religious Jews who had emigrated from

Iraq. But as a teenager, he ran away from home and became a social dropout. He learned from his fellow dropouts how to convince military personnel that he was mentally unfit, and thus managed to avoid most of his mandatory term in the armed forces (it's now one of his biggest regrets).

It was years later, when he was climbing the ladder of success in New York City, enjoying money and parties, that an American walked into his shop and, seeing the Jewish Scriptures on the counter, engaged him in conversation about Yeshua.

Damkani grew up calling Jesus "Yeshu," a word said as a curse. (The Hebrew letters in Yeshu are an acronym for a phrase that basically means, "May his name and his memory be obliterated.")

But his American friend knew the Torah better than Damkani himself did, and Damkani began to realize that the Jesus he hated had fulfilled many of the prophecies about the Messiah.

## Always a threat

For 20 years now Damkani has been preaching the name Yeshua on the streets of Israel. For the last 15 years, it's been under the ministry he founded known as Trumpet

of Salvation. (He often plays the shofar to gather a crowd.)

"One of the things that has changed greatly is the awareness of Jesus in the land," Damkani told EP News in a recent telephone interview from his home in Jaffa, Israel. "When I started all this, it was quite a shocking idea. The nation is more and more aware of the fact that to believe in Jesus is a Jewish thing. When we stand up and give the alternative — what true Judaism is all about, more and more, particularly from the young generation, there is openness."

The message, of course, isn't welcomed by everyone. "That is a real threat to the authorities," Damkani says. "In a sense, nothing has changed in 2,000 years; Jesus was a real threat. There's a lot of pressure, especially in this last year, with a lot of riots, a lot of persecution against Messianic believers. We covet the prayers of our brothers and sisters."

Israel's legislative body, the Knesset, continues to consider bills to outlaw evangelism. "It will keep coming up," says Damkani. "Anyone caught actually evangelizing will be fined 50,000 shekels (\$15,000) or be in jail for three years."

But Christian individuals from other nations continue to come to Israel to work on Trumpet of Salvation evangelistic teams; these three-week experiences combine intensive education with sight-seeing and evangelism. And there are other Christian groups doing long-term evangelistic work in Israel.

Damkani insists, "If we deny the conversion of Israel, we undermine the foundation of our own salvation, which is based on God's Word to us. If we believe his promises to Israel can be discarded, what reason do we have for trusting his Word?"

## More proof of King David discovered

KARNAK, Egypt (religiontoday.com) — Archaeologists have more proof of King David's existence. The inscription "Heights of David" was found on a list of locations in southern Judah, retired Egyptologist Kenneth Kitchen has told the Associated Press. Archaeologists excavating the Temple of Amun in Karnak, Upper Egypt, discovered the list, dated to the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C., just after the time of King David.

Kitchen says his interpretation of the list is not certain because of confusion over one of the letters in the inscription. It could be the third piece of evidence that King David, thought by some to be a mythological figure, actually existed, *Biblical Archeology Review* says. Two other inscriptions found in the 1990s are said to bear references to King David.

## Muslim leaders want Islamic law for Nigeria

LAGOS, Nigeria (Compass) — Muslim leaders in Nigeria are increasing pressure on the government to enshrine Islamic law in the draft constitution currently being debated. They want the government to adopt the provisions of the Koran as "a comprehensive code of life."

The draft constitution being debated was written in 1995 by the administration of Nigeria's former

head of state. In this draft, contentious issues that touch on religion say that the government shall not adopt any religion as state or local government religion. However, other sections in the same draft provide for the establishment of a sharia court at the state level, and a sharia court of appeal at the federal level.

This contradiction has raised tension between Muslims and

Christians. Many Muslims see the provisions as a step forward in their Islamization bid, while Christians are saying the government is promoting Islam. Christians have said they will oppose any constitution that does not reflect the true aspirations and feelings of all nationalities in Nigeria.

## Evangelicals burgeoning in Bolivia

(religiontoday.com) — Bolivia's evangelical population is growing. Evangelical Christians are increasing in number and comprise about an eighth of the population, Ecumenical News International said. A survey by the United Evangelical Churches of Cochabamba found that more than one million people belong to an evangelical church. The country has about eight million residents, most of whom are Roman Catholic.

The growth of evangelicalism resulted in record Bible sales in 1998. The Bolivian Bible Society sold about 140,000 Bibles, 50,000 more than the previous one-year period. "Neo-Pentecostal churches

are the ones that request the most Bibles. They are always active in squares, parks, and theaters," said pastor Carlos Huaynoca of the

country's Bible Society. New television and radio stations are broadcasting Christian programs.

## Refugees get a taste of Reformation

(religiontoday.com) — Instead of expanding its parking lot, a Tennessee church has started a home for refugees. Reformation Lutheran Church in Greenville purchased a house and lot across the street, intending to turn the space into a parking lot. Then "the light came on," member David Parr told *The Lutheran* magazine. "We felt God would rather provide the

house for someone in need than stripe a few more parking spaces."

Volunteers helped fix up the house; church members and businesses contributed appliances, furniture, money, paint and a car. The Porobic family, a refugee couple and their two children from Bosnia, live in the house. They had spent seven years in Austria after fleeing from the Bosnian civil war.

## 'Patron saint' of computer users

ROME (religiontoday.com) — A medieval Spanish Christian is being identified as a patron saint for computer users. Vatican researchers reportedly have identified Saint Isidore, bishop of Seville, Spain, as the most suitable patron. He was born in 556 and was one of the church's leading intellectuals, the Latin American and Caribbean Communications Agency said.

Isidore has been considered a man ahead of his time. He wrote a form of dictionary, called *Etymologies*, which, like the World Wide

Web, gave its readers access to massive amounts of knowledge. Written in 20 volumes, it contained information on liberal arts, medicine, agriculture, architecture, the books and offices of the church and other church subjects.

Isidore "had a profound impact upon the culture and educational practice of Western medieval Europe," the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* says. "His works became a storehouse of knowledge freely utilized by innumerable medieval authors."



## News/Advice

## Iron Springs CRC is 50 years old



Iron Springs CRC today.

### Henry Heinen

IRON SPRINGS, Alta. — Before World War II there were Christian Reformed congregations in Nobleford, Burdett, Neerlandia, Edmonton, Granum and Lacombe, Alberta, begun by Dutch immigrants. But in the Iron Springs area, also known as the Coyote Flats, there were just a handful of Dutch Reformed families. Iron Springs is a small hamlet about 37 km northeast of Lethbridge.

Then post-WWII immigrants (the Getkates, Donkersgoed's and others) arrived to work in the sugar beets, and as a result of the work of home missionary Rev. Peter Hoekstra and "fieldman" Bernard Nieboer, it was decided that something must be done to seek a place of worship near Iron Springs.

On Sept. 5, 1948, the people received the happy news that Rev. John de Jong of Manhattan, Montana, had accepted a call from Nobleford CRC to work in the area as a home missionary. (John and Jennie de Jong had nine children, all of them adults by this time.)

De Jong was installed on November 12, and his first sermon in Iron Springs was based on 1 Cor. 1:23-24, in which he pointed out that "we preach the crucified Christ and believe in one salvation."

The very next day it was decided to ask Classis Pacific, which would meet in Lynden, Wash., on March 2 and 3, 1949, to approve the official establishing of a Christian Reformed congregation in Iron Springs. The classis gave its approval and Iron Springs CRC became a legitimate church.

Ninety-five-year-old member Art Van Zeggelaar remembers the following significant dates: March 9, 1958, when the church building burned down; Feb. 20, 1959, the dedication of the new church building; May 3, 1974, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

In 1992, the Picture Butte and District Chamber of Commerce chose Bernard Nieboer as Citizen of the Year for his work in settling hundreds of Dutch immigrants on farms in and around Lethbridge.

## Jesus' implied struggle with sexual temptation a comfort

Dear P & M:

*What I would really like to see addressed is something that I and some irreverent friends have speculated about: Jesus' sex life. It might seem blasphemous to consider it, but surely he must have experienced some sexual release since he was a real human male. This theme was explored in the movie *The Last Temptation of Christ* in which Christ's "last temptation" was portrayed as the desire to get off the cross and become involved with a woman, en route to having a family.*

*Ultimately he did what he had to do, but the thought that Jesus would wrestle with the issue of sexuality was a great comfort to me. It's too bad that the Bible nowhere talks about this issue.*

*I am a man who has a strong sex drive, but I am very ambivalent about commitment. I have had numerous affairs which leave me feeling guilty because I often find myself looking for someone else when I am already in a relationship with a woman. I'm not married. I'm mostly pretty careful about not saying that I'm in love with anyone. But sometimes the women I'm with assume it.*

*Mixed into the mess that I am is the fact that I'm lazy, that I don't have any real goals, that I have had many different jobs that have not fulfilled me, and that I have been depressed to the point that if I'd had a loaded gun....*

*Leaving all that aside, my starting point is a question about Jesus' sex life because I feel that love affairs and relationships are what most people live for. If you don't feel loved, you feel awful. If Jesus never had any kind of sexual relationship, how can he relate to humanity?*

*By the way, no one has confronted me on the issue of my lifestyle and I feel a little let down. I try to be discreet but I'm not always successful, yet no one has ever dealt with it. I wonder if that is because we are all so hypocritical when it comes to sex.*

### Dear Inability To Commit:

As one who was fully human, Jesus struggled with everything that has ever confronted us, including all the issues and feelings that are part of human sexuality. The Bible does actually speak about this. We're told that Jesus was "made like his brothers in every way" and that "because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted" (Heb. 2:17-18).

Two chapters later in the book of Hebrews we come across a similar verse which says that "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Notice that the writer twice says "in every way." Also notice the phrase "suffered when he was tempted." These passages and this realization about Jesus should give you the same kind of

Peter and Marja  
are  
IN



comfort that you derived from the movie *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

Your own struggle with sexuality as a single man does not surprise us. After all, hunger and sex are our two strongest drives, created in us by God not only so that we might survive as individuals and as a human race, but to allow us to delight in the exquisite pleasures of good food and the intimacies of love.

Yet there's more to life than hunger and sex, and you are right when you talk about the importance of relationships and fulfilling goals. However, while involved in one relationship you are already wondering if someone else wouldn't be more exciting. While working at one job you are already looking for something more interesting. Your restlessness leaves you in limbo, frustrated and depressed. No wonder you wrestle with guilt. No wonder you feel unfulfilled.

**You want someone to confront you.** We'll be happy to. Your problem is not with sex and it's not with laziness. Your problem is your inability to commit. Our challenge to you is this: seek out a Christian counsellor and get the help you need so that you can commit to one woman and find fulfilment in one vocation.

Your promiscuous personal life harms you and the women you date; your restless work habits keep you from being a blessing to your boss and co-workers. Don't enter any new relationship or entertain any new job offer until you learn what it means to be a promise keeper.

We don't want you to feel awful. We want you to feel loved. But don't confuse sex and love. When Jesus chose to stay single he did not renounce the love and friendships that "people really live for," he renounced sex and marriage for himself "because of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:12). His many relationships continued, including relationships with his heavenly Father, his disciples, his family, and numerous female friends who supported him and cared for his needs (Luke 8:3, Mark 15:41).

So you are right. Relationships are crucial to our well-being. But Jesus' life and ministry remind us that meaning and fulfilment are not found in sex but in a commitment to the Lord who then enables us to make commitments that strengthen all the other areas of our lives.

**Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.**

*Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Wivroet.*

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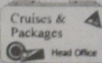
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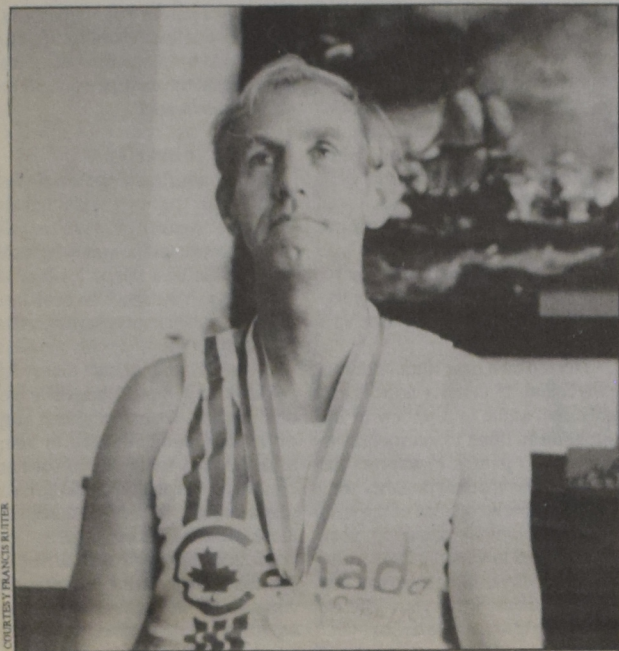
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## Personal

# God's sustaining hand through trial and pain



Francis Ruiter in athletic gear, before his accident.

## Francis Ruiter

*"The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance." Psalm 16:6*

It was such a beautiful day, that first Monday in August in 1987. I worked in the garden that morning for a while, picking beans for canning. After preparing the beans for cooking I left to go for an hour bicycle ride, intending to be back by lunchtime.

I did not show up for lunch as my wife, Grace, had expected. Instead, when the doorbell sounded and she opened the door, there was a police officer facing her. He asked if she were Mrs. Ruiter. She smiled and said yes, not suspecting anything. The officer explained that her husband was in the hospital as a result of a bicycle accident, and asked if he could accompany her to the hospital. Grace first hesitated, somewhat bewildered, and mentioned her state of clothing and that she was canning. He suggested she should come as she was; he entered the house, going to the kitchen with her to make sure the stove was turned off. En route he asked her about her children and how he could reach them. He did not tell her that her husband had earlier arrived at the hospital near death because of serious blood loss.

At the hospital, Grace was met

by the chaplain, who took her to my bedside in the emergency ward. There she was informed what state I was in, and that it might be necessary to amputate my left leg. Again Grace felt bewildered and could not quite comprehend what had happened, nor how serious the multiple injuries were.

In the meantime, the officer who brought Grace to the hospital, went to pick up Marianne from her work at Safeway. Linda, who was attending her own child at the Royal Alex Hospital, was informed by telephone of her dad's accident and asked to come. The chaplain called Pastor DeWaal, and he came to comfort the family, since my condition was still considered serious.

## Cycle on!

All of this I have from hearsay and the family's recollections. I don't remember anything of the accident and that day's goings on. That evening, I awoke from sedation and found Carolyn and Phil standing by the bedside. They showed concern but said nothing. So I started the conversation, asking them if they had seen the new rattan furniture we had bought. They, in turn, could not grasp this question when surely their father was in bad shape and must be delirious.

Asking questions over the next few days, I became more aware of the particulars of what had

happened. I had been hit from behind by a motor vehicle while riding my bicycle, and was left in the ditch on a rural road. A retired nurse and her husband had witnessed the accident from a distance, and she had made a tourniquet to stem the bleeding.

## He did not tell her that her husband had earlier arrived at the hospital near death because of serious blood loss.

Another passerby with a cellular phone called 911 for an ambulance. I was saved from death. I believed this to be God's intervention to save me for family and possible other use, in his providence.

I remember cycling on the shoulder of Highway 16 one day, some months earlier, and thinking about the possibility of being struck by a car or truck. I thought to myself: "Yes, it can happen. Just because you pray for safety, you are not automatically protected from mishaps. Therefore, cycle on!"

I did not know that ahead of me lay the painful road of being hospitalized for a total of five months, off and on, over a period of nearly three years, and being on crutches as well. To be in the operating room eight times for bone grafts (three of them would not take), and later, for revisions of the amputated stump.

The initial admission involved screwing my foot back on to its ankle and having steel pins stuck into drilled holes of the tibia to keep them aligned. The most excruciating pain hit me after the reconstruction of the shattered leg when the bandaging was lifted off the skin graft wound. I could hardly bear it.

## Suffering and support

When I took stock on my situation after the reconstruction, I felt optimistic about healing. After all, this athletic fellow can't be put down! I was also somewhat in denial of the consequences. However, after the second bone graft six weeks later, and after enduring so much pain, the post-operation trauma brought me to tears every time someone asked me how I was doing. It was three weeks before

Christmas that I phoned my brother in the Netherlands from my bed at 3 o'clock in the morning, when it was about noon over there. I asked him to come and visit me, which he did. He and his wife, Gre, came within a few days. They helped console Grace and me, and also were company for her.

The horror that I faced after the second bone graft was that I had to be on an intravenous drip for seven weeks. It was used to infuse a toxic drug into my system to fight a persistent bone infection. The fear was that the drug could damage my kidneys and hearing. I survived, with much frustration, being tied down with the drip system on a pole, the nurses always needing to find new veins into which to put in the intravenous needles. It taxed my patience severely!

## Compensations

In April 1989, the tibia would not heal and a bone graft was performed one more time. It did not take. In the following January, infection in the leg started up again, and it became evident that leg would need to be removed. My left leg was amputated below the knee at the end of February 1990.

After the amputation, fitting the stump into a prosthesis was not easy. The mangled condition of what was left after the operation required a number of fittings until the stump had reduced in size. A year later a revision for a better fit

was done. This was repeated two years later. After almost three years on crutches and numerous fittings, I gradually improved my mobility.

It was after my amputation that I took up swimming again. I joined the new YMCA, in my neighborhood. I can swim to exercise my body in relative comfort and without pain.

A few times, people who acted like Job's friends asked me if I thought God had visited me with this accident. To which I answered: "I don't believe God wants me to be handicapped, but if he did cause this accident to happen, I would be honored that he would bother with me, a sinner. Like Job, I know that my Redeemer lives."

I feel blessed in many ways. I can accept my pain and handicap, yet I don't think of it much as a handicap anymore because I get around easily enough and don't miss the running and cycling. I miss the hiking somewhat, but am rewarded with time and resources to travel by other means.

I have travelled to Bangladesh, Kenya and Cuba, and visiting fellow Christians in those places has been a joy for me. My life is rich! There are so many ways to enjoy God's creation, and I feel grateful that I still can!

*Francis Ruiter lives in Edmonton, Alberta, and is a member of Covenant Christian Reformed Church there.*

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## Advice

# How to survive sharing a home with friends or relatives

Janet Sketchley

Sickness. Downsizing. Family breakup. Aging. Unemployment. Rising costs. Underemployment. They strike without warning. Sometimes the only way to survive

is to move in with family or friends for a time. It could happen to any of us. And it's harder than it looks.

When our two older sons were preschoolers my husband and I felt led to open our home to a friend.

We all lived together for five months. We're still on speaking terms, but it wasn't easy at times.

I'd like to share a few hints to reduce the stress of home sharing. Some of these came to us as advice; others were learned as we went along.

First, before even mentioning the subject to the other party(ies), pray. Pray for clear direction and wait for an answer. This is definitely not one of those situations to enter on impulse.

## Share expectations

If both parties agree that living together is the right choice, sit down for a serious discussion. It's important to identify your expectations ahead of time in order to minimize unpleasant surprises down the road.

Think about each family's basic codes of conduct. Decide what, if anything, can be compromised while you're living together, and be very clear about what can not. There may be some rules, like "no swearing," that one family or the other will need to adopt for the duration.

Each family has different parenting styles, and these need to be respected. Avoid interfering in the other parents' methods of child-rearing. You are not helping if you try to take on the role of an extra parent. It's overwhelming to a child to have every adult giving instructions. When you have to, bite your tongue. Literally, if need be. It's important to keep your opinions to yourself.

Remember that children will be affected by the changes in your household. Go easy on them, and watch for signs of stress.

Spell out standards of cleanliness for any areas that must be shared. The definition of an "acceptably clean" bathroom or kitchen, for example, changes greatly from one family to another. This is one area in which the permanent family must have authority. Without making the newcomers feel like intruders, you need to know that your home will still be properly maintained.

## Compromises

Having said that, it's important to lighten up as much as you can. Everybody has a different way of doing things. If you can overlook your new housemates' approach to most household tasks, so much the better. Just be aware of anything that can't be overlooked, and state your expectations clearly.

Agree on a division of bills. There are more costs involved than

the rent or mortgage. Food and utility bills will increase. Will you pool your groceries or keep them separate? Who will take on what responsibilities? This is more complex when whole families are involved, but is important when dealing with an individual as well.

Always remember: if you sense you'll have too many conflicts, find another option before you commit yourself and find you regret it. Don't wait until you're living together and at one another's throats.

Decide on a time limit to the arrangement. If there is no foreseeable end, agree to a review of the situation in three to six months to allow both parties to express the need for any changes that they see.

Find a friend outside of the situation to be your sounding post. You'll need to vent the little irritations that can cripple a person, but sharing them with your spouse won't help either one of you. Choose carefully — you need someone trustworthy who knows how to keep a confidence. Rumors always have a way of slipping back around to the people they can hurt.

## Don't sweat it

Once you've taken the plunge and moved in together, relax. You'll have to let some things slide during this phase in your home life. Enjoy your friends or relatives. Don't sweat the small stuff.

When necessary, clear the air. Irritations are bound to crop up. It may be something very minor, and you may be tempted to keep quiet and not rock the boat. Think about it. Can you get used to it? If so, accept it. If you can't, take the first opportunity to express yourself gently.

Respect your house-mates' needs to do the same. Don't allow yourself to feel threatened when they bring up a problem. Remember that you're all on the same side, working to live together in peace. If you start to see yourselves as two warring factions vying for control, it's time to separate.

Give each other as much room as possible. Some people need more solitude than others. If you hate to be alone, remember that others do need time to themselves, and make yourself scarce sometimes.

If you need some space, be frank about it. This may go against the grain of hospitality, but you're neither a host nor a visitor. You are trying to coexist with others in your (temporarily) joint home.

Beware comparisons. When an adult of the opposite sex is

suddenly a part of your household, comparisons are inevitable. If your spouse has only one weakness, it's a given that this new person will be strong in that area.

## Protect yourself

Guard your marriage carefully. Don't allow the newcomer to inadvertently weaken it. We've all heard tales about the man who took up with his best friend's wife, or vice versa. You don't want to become the next chapter in the perennial story.

Even if you think that you couldn't be tempted, consider the other person. You don't want him or her becoming attracted to you, either. Avoid becoming his or her confidant. That role belongs to one's spouse, romantic interest or close friend of the same sex.

If that makes you look hard-hearted and unwilling to listen, so what? It's better than getting yourself into a dangerous situation. There's nothing like a sympathetic listener to generate warm feelings. This is especially true for a lonely person or someone going through stressful times.

Be accountable to someone. Your "sounding-post" friend is vital here. Watch your thoughts and reactions. At the slightest sign of affection or attraction between you and one of your opposite-sex housemates, call your listening friend at once. Ask your friend to check up on you regularly as well, to make sure that you aren't slipping.

This can have a positive side: it can remind you of the value of your marriage and keep you from taking your spouse for granted. Also, comparisons work both ways. You may develop a renewed appreciation for your spouse.

Sharing a home with another individual or family is probably not the sort of thing a person would choose unnecessarily, but it can be a time of growth and blessing. God expects us to help one another, and if he leads you into this situation, he will give you the strength to lead you through it.

Our God's power has not grown stale since creating the world, parting the Red Sea or raising Jesus Christ from the dead. If you're sure of his leading, you can be sure of his help. His presence will carry you through this phase of your life and enable you to survive.

*Janet Sketchley is a homemaker and part-time writer. She and her husband have three young sons and worship together at Regal Road United Baptist Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.*

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## 25 interesting observations about Japan

Roxanne VanFarowe

NAGASAKI — As a Canadian in Japan, I observe the following:

1. FISH for breakfast
2. VEGGIES AND FRUIT come on styrofoam trays wrapped in saran wrap.
3. NASHIS — giant round pears with a rough, yellow-brown skin.
4. PERSIMMONS — grow on tress. Look like orange tomatoes and taste like a cross between a pear and a tomato.
5. GRAPES — big, with sour skins that people spit out.
6. EXTENDED FAMILIES live together — grandparents, parents, children.
7. COCKROACHES — Everyone has them, including us.
8. PILLOWS — Filled with rice or beans.
9. CLOTHES POLES instead of clotheslines and no warm water setting on washing machines.
10. CENTRAL HEATING — none!
11. DOORS — most slide to the side instead of swinging on hinges.
12. RICE COOKERS — pour in some rice and water, press a button, and presto, beautiful rice 20 minutes later.
13. TRASH — Many people burn it in public furnaces provided for the purpose or in the backyard.
14. SLIPPERS — worn in the home and also at many restaurants and other public places.
15. KINDERGARTENS have goats, chickens, rabbits, and geese for children to enjoy.
16. PIANOS in every kindergarten classroom. Teachers must pass a piano exam to be hired.
17. P.A. SYSTEM — used to call kindergarten kids into the school.
18. UNIFORMS — Junior high school students wear them almost all the time.
19. SHORTS — Kindergarten kids wear them year-round — yes, even in winter.
20. SATURDAYS — School every other Saturday.
21. PINK spiders.
22. STORKS — very beautiful.
23. WILD BOARS — not like Disney.
24. NATIONAL HOLIDAYS — time off work in the middle of the week if that's when they fall — no long weekend
25. MORE HOLIDAYS — Children's Day and Respect for the Aged Day to name a couple.

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## A golden opportunity in a land of amber



PHOTO COURTESY DAN &amp; NAN DOERKSEN

One of the Doerksens' English classes at LCC.

### Alan Doerksen

KLAIPEDA, Lithuania – Lithuania is a land of legends and folktales, where golden pieces of amber are crafted into beautiful jewelry, and where sand dunes loom high above bustling seaside towns. But it is also a country damaged by Soviet Communism, where the people are only now starting to rediscover their spiritual roots.

When Communism beat its final retreat from Lithuania in the early 1990s, Christians were finally free to practice their faith more openly. In 1991 a group of Christians and Lithuania's Ministry of Education helped to start Lithuania Christian College (LCC)

*Lithuanians who attend churches take their faith seriously because they have only recently had the freedom to worship.*

in the port city of Klaipeda to give life to a dream of Christian liberal arts higher education. Classes began in 1992, and in May 1997, Lithuania's Ministry of Education granted LCC status as a post-secondary, higher education institution, allowing it to award state-recognized diplomas.

As Lithuania has opened its borders to the Western world, LCC has made strong international connections. Many of its faculty are professors and teachers from North America and Europe who are on sabbatical or retired.

### An unusual choice

One such couple is Dan and Nan Doerksen of Fredericton, New Brunswick. Dan Doerksen taught English literature at the University of New Brunswick until his retirement in 1997. When a Canadian couple considers what to do after retiring, travelling to warmer climates is often on the agenda. But spending a year teaching in Lithuania, on the edge of the Baltic Sea, was an unusual choice.

Dan Doerksen explained his reasons in an e-mail interview. "The very idea of working with a new Christian liberal arts college in a former part of the Soviet Union [was] exciting and appealing. When I approached retirement, it was an option I seriously considered for the additional reason that there seemed to be a good match between my gifts and experience and the needs of this college.

"For a long time I have been grateful to God for his allowing me the satisfaction of very fulfilling employment as a professor teaching not only English literature, but also the Bible as literature, and specifically the writings of George Herbert, John Donne, Edmund Spenser and John Milton, in a secular university. In a way, my work at LCC is a kind of thank you to God."

Nan Doerksen observes, "Although I have found great fulfillment in raising a family, being involved in many areas of volunteer work, and in writing, I believe God was challenging us to use our abilities in a country that is trying very hard to establish itself as an independent, competitive entity.

"Both Dan and I had decided some years ago that if our health remained good after his retirement, we would like to use our abilities in some Third-World country, as volunteers. I had taught English to Chinese students in Fredericton on a one-on-one basis, so I thought I would be teaching in the English as an International Language Program (EIL). However, when they saw that I had a Master's degree in English, I was asked to teach at the college instead."

Late last August, the Doerksens (this writer's parents) travelled to Lithuania to begin two terms of teaching. Moving to Klaipeda, a thriving port city on the edge of the Baltic Sea, was a big change from the tranquil city of Fredericton.

"Klaipeda is a different place for us because directly before our windows is evidence that we are in a seaport, with ships going by and being loaded and unloaded. In the mornings we often see the stevedores coming off the night shift and stopping for a drink at a shop right on the street. Drinking in public is permitted here and is a problem," Dan observes.

### 'Ankle express'

The Doerksens had to adjust to living in a small apartment within the student and faculty residence. Transportation in Klaipeda is either by bus or "ankle express," as Nan refers to walking around.

Finding a church was difficult because few have English services. Every Sunday evening they participate in the Klaipeda International Fellowship, held in English

at LCC; the group includes other English-speakers from the area. The styles of worship vary considerably and involve much participation by LCC faculty.

Usually the Doerksens attend the Lithuanian Baptist service in the local Baptist church. In this service, and in the Russian service which precedes it, translation into English is provided, mainly for LCC staffers. These services may go on for two hours, and feature a small choir, a fairly long sermon and a testimony by a member of the church.

### Calvinist sermons

"We join in the singing of Lithuanian hymns, some of which are translated from English, including modern choruses," explains Dan. "Once a month we go to the Lutheran church for their monthly German service, since we know that language well. The service there has a much greater liturgical emphasis, and we often sing hymns composed by Martin Luther and other sixteenth- or seventeenth-century writers. The excellent sermons have been given by a German Calvinist theologian who teaches at Klaipeda University (or its theological branch)."

Another church the Doerksens have visited is one founded by LCC students, whose services are well attended and lively, but unfortunately only in Lithuanian.

The Doerksens observe that churches they have visited seem to

have a small membership but a mixture of all age groups. People who do attend take their faith seriously because they have only recently had the freedom to worship. The Catholic Church is still Lithuania's primary church.

Working at LCC is a busy life, with much teaching and marking to do. Nan teaches three classes of Written Communication to first-year college students, and is the staff advisor to the student paper. Dan teaches Introduction to Literature to three classes, and a British Literature survey course to second- and third-year students.

### Frenetic pace

"For me, the hardest thing has been the frenetic pace of life at LCC," Nan admits. "I rarely have time to read for pleasure, or simply to meditate quietly, and that is something I miss very much."

"Because of the very substantial load of student papers to read, we have not become involved much in other things such as Bible studies with students," Dan says. "We do attend student assemblies and some social events. Both of us try to be available to students, and having our apartment in the student dormitory building facilitates this."

"Students say that what they like about LCC is the friendliness of the staff towards the students and the respect for them — the freedom they have to voice opinions, something which apparently



Dan and Nan Doerksen in front of Lithuania Christian College





The harbourfront of the port city of Klaipeda, Lithuania.



An amber necklace from Lithuania.

is not generally the case in their universities," Nan asserts. "Everyone here is on a first-name basis; we are Nan and Dan to all the students."

There are often potluck get-togethers for staff, which are a good way of getting people to meet each other socially. On LCC's teaching staff there are 10 Canadians, nine Americans and three Lithuanians. All the students and faculty can and do speak English, since it is an English college. Informally, students and Lithuanian faculty speak their own language, which for some of the students is Russian.

LCC is interdenominational, getting support from Mennonite, Presbyterian and other church agencies. It now has partnerships for faculty and student exchanges with Eastern Mennonite University (in the United States), Trinity Western University and Concord College (in Canada). Discussions are underway for similar arrangements with Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

"The most interesting aspect of being here, for me, is to learn about the people of Lithuania and about the country," says Nan. "The young people with whom we work are bright and eager to learn, happy

to have the opportunity to study here. I am learning a great deal from them through their journals and what they say in class. Some of them are Christians, others are not, but we can see that God is at work in this country."

### The amber connection

Lithuanians "are very proud of their traditions, and now, of their independence, because they have lived under occupation for so much of their history," Nan observes. "They have many wonderful folktales — about amber, for instance."

Amber is found in abundance,

washed up on the seacoast. Legend has it that long ago, a king lived at the bottom of the Baltic Sea in a palace made out of golden amber. One day he came onshore and met a woman whom he later married. Together they lived in the magnificent underwater palace.

But as time went by, the woman started to miss her family and friends on the land, and pleaded with her husband for the chance to visit them. Reluctantly, he agreed, but only if she promised not to tell her family who he was. She agreed, and eagerly left the palace.

But while onshore, the woman's family kept asking her,

"Who is your husband?" At last, she could no longer keep the secret, and told them. Suddenly, the amber palace was destroyed, and her husband with it. And ever since then, pieces of amber have washed up on the shores of Lithuania, says the tale — fragments of the long-lost palace.

Rather like this legend, Lithuanians retain fragments of their Christian heritage — golden gems scattered across the beach, waiting to be rediscovered. The challenge for teachers at LCC is to help young Lithuanians find these gems, polish them and make them a part of their lives.

## My mysterious cousin Bob

**Sonya VanderVeen Feddema**

It's not everyday that Cousin Bob phones. In fact, he had never called me until Wednesday during the second half of my Family Studies class.

That day I had assigned each of my Grade 12 students in that class the task of teaching a 75-minute class period which was divided in half by a 10-minute break. Thomas was in charge of teaching the other students about adolescent peer pressure. After the break, as Thomas continued, he talked more and more slowly, stretching out his presentation.

Just then, Ann, the school secretary, knocked on the classroom door. She walked up to me and said softly, "Mr. VanderVeen, your cousin Bob's on the phone. It's

long distance."

"My cousin Bob?" I asked, surprised. "Thomas, continue. I'll be back in a second. Ann, I'll take the call on the phone across the hall in the science prep room." I left the

*My cousin Bob? I thought. I don't have a cousin named Bob.*

door ajar and walked to the phone, my mind preoccupied with thoughts on how to critique Thomas's presentation.

"Hello," I said. "Hello?" I spoke loudly to make myself heard

above the noise now emitting from my classroom across the hall. The students obviously were in ecstasy because of Thomas's presentation. Their thirst for knowledge assuaged me.

"Hello," I said again. Then the dial tone droned monotonously into my ear. Irritated, I banged down the receiver and returned to my classroom.

### Serious academics

Whatever had excited the students while I was gone had them dumbstruck when I returned to the room. Looks of glee melted into serious academic gazes. I had never heard a class of students quiet down that quickly.

As Thomas continued his presentation, I had the distinct sense

that I had missed an impressive part of it while I was on the telephone. My cousin Bob? I thought. I don't have a cousin named Bob.

The lunch bell rang and I dismissed the class. After lunch I went to choir to sing with students and a few other teachers. I sat down in my usual seat beside Jorin, a Grade 12 student. We watched silently as the choir director led the sopranos. Jorin glanced sideways at me several times, then cleared his throat.

"Ah, Sir," he said.

"Yes, Jorin?"

"I have something to tell you."

"What is it?" I prompted.

"I'm cousin Bob," he blurted out. "Thomas was running out of things to say during the first half of class. So at break we decided I

would call you from the pay phone downstairs in the hall. To buy him time."

It was then I remembered that Jorin had walked into Family Studies class a few moments after I had.

I sighed in relief. I'm not losing my mind after all, I thought. I knew I didn't have a cousin named Bob.

Jorin smiled sheepishly at me. And then we laughed. The joke was on me, but I didn't mind. Sharing the laugh only strengthened the bridge between my students and me.

*Sonya VanderVeen Feddema wrote this story as told by her husband, Rinke VanderVeen, a teacher at Beacon Christian High School, St. Catharines, Ontario. She has won several awards for her stories.*



## Theology

# Children of a larger God: Good theology enlarges the soul

## An interview with J.I. Packer

Kevin Miller and Marshall Shelley

**For many, theology is a bad word. Why have you devoted your life to it?**

It helps me appreciate the greatness and glory of God — lifting up the sheer wonder and size and majesty of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the providence of God, the Puritans and Calvin taught me that's what theology is about. The truth I try to grasp and share is truth that enlarges the soul because it tunes into the greatness of God. It generates awe and adoration.

**If this is theology, why do so many people find it objectionable or boring?**

Too often theology has been taught in a rigidly defensive way: "This stuff you are to believe and share; these are the errors you are to recognize and reject." Simply projecting orthodoxy that way doesn't give much stimulus to the mind because the conclusion is determined before you've asked the question, and devotionally it is barren.

Such an approach shrinks the soul. Focusing on the greatness of God, though, enlarges the soul. Paradoxically, it makes you a greater person by making you a smaller person. It makes you humble. It lowers you in your own estimate. I've always tried to present truth so that it will humble the sinner and exalt the Savior, and so produce a Christian who's of larger stature than one who simply knows orthodoxy and is prepared to recite it on demand.

**What does God-exalting theology say to a culture like ours, which aims to exalt the self?**

The business of religion, in many circles, has become trying to make people happy. Anything that enlarges my comfort zone is regarded as good, godly, proper, and to be integrated into my religion.

But true theology challenges the presuppositions of North American culture, both secular and churchly, both of which seem to be primarily concerned with the "right to happiness." True theology calls on us to deny the claims of self and exalt God instead.

**You don't come across as someone who is confrontational, though.**

You don't usually get anywhere with self-absorbed people by throwing a challenge in their faces. In-your-face style usually produces an indignant, negative reaction or withdrawal. Instead, I've tried to infiltrate happiness-oriented minds with the thought that God might be greater than we imagine and might have a different agenda for us.

I build everything on biblical exegesis and application. John Calvin and the Puritans did that. And in preaching and writing, I find an enormous difference between the feel of putting out my own ideas and the feel of simply echoing and enforcing what God has said in his Word.

You have liberty and authority when you allow the Bible to talk through you, a liberty and authority you don't have if you're offering your own ideas or cherished notions. By expanding on Scripture, all of which is God-centred material, I challenge self-absorption indirectly all the time.

**Does that mean you're opposed to a user-friendly or seeker-oriented approach to ministry?**

Insofar as pastors are concerned to communicate with people where they really are, such concern is very good — but not if they tailor the message so as simply to give people what they want, in hope of increasing church attendance. I know of one or two professedly seeker-sensitive churches where nothing gets paraded or taught but the ABCs of the gospel — why an outsider will find the Christian life a happier life and how an outsider becomes a Christian. In those congregations, Christians of some standing and relative maturity are starving because there's nothing provided for them.

**Is it legitimate to appeal to non-Christians at the point of their admittedly self-absorbed need — for example, by offering marriage seminars?**

There's great wisdom in the old adage "Scratch where it itches." The question is: What are you going to tell them about the particular problems on their minds? The really good evangelists, like Billy Graham, always say these problems cannot be solved unless the bigger problem of their basic relationship with God is also solved. Rightly they explain: "It's a single

package. We can't put your family life straight unless you're prepared to become a new creature in Christ."

**In light of verses about the blessedness of the Christian life, isn't it legitimate to preach that true Christianity is a means to personal fulfilment?**

It's legitimate once you've guarded against the mistake that makes it illegitimate. The mistake is to suppose that I should think of myself as the centre of the universe, and God as there for my comfort and my convenience — as if God exists merely to bless me. That assumption has to be junked.

We exist for God. God, in his great mercy, has promised that

best, likely to remain stunted Christians. The struggle to change at this point is necessary for growth.

**Repentance doesn't seem to be a popular theme in preaching these days. Why is that?**

It's due to theological neglect. We don't preach it, and people don't understand it because we don't have an awesome, horizon-filling, overwhelming sense of the greatness and holiness and goodness of God.

Thomas Chalmers, a Scottish pastor of the 1800s, spoke of the "expulsive power of a new affection." That's how true repentance is born; that's how lives get transformed. The new affection is

as the act of God putting away guilt; they don't think of themselves as guilty." Well, that's our fault because we haven't told them of their guilt. We haven't made them recognize how thoroughly they've been dishonoring and defying God. We've left them on the egocentric happiness track.

**Are judgment and hell themes, then, that today's preachers can use?**

They need to play a more prominent part in our message than they have in the last half-century. There's been a strong reaction in Christian circles against imaginative presentations of hell, the fire and all of that. But people do need to know that lostness is a fact.

I have struggled with this a bit in writing against conditional immortality, which is the idea that human beings are not built to last forever, that endless existence is a gift that only the born-again receive, and that those who don't qualify for heaven simply get snuffed out. It's a form of annihilationism.

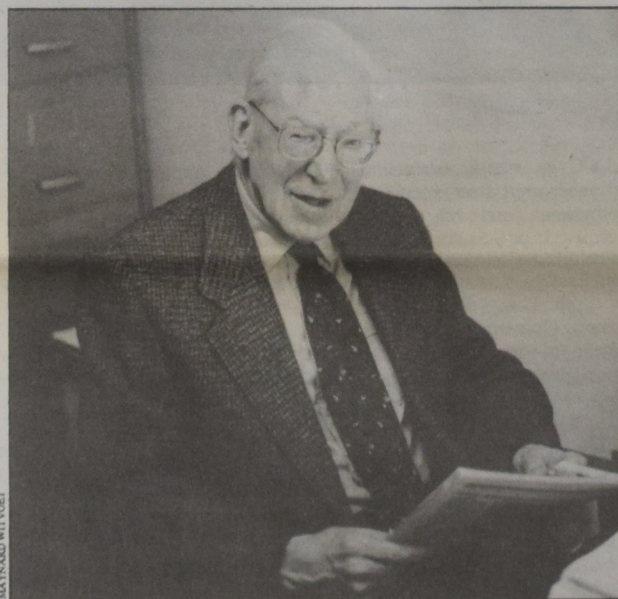
My concept of hell owes more to C.S. Lewis, whose key thought is that what you have chosen to be in this world comes back at you as your eternal destiny; if you have chosen to have your back, rather than your face, to God; if you've chosen to put up the shutters against his grace rather than to receive it, that's how you will spend eternity. Hell is to live in a state apart from God, where all of the good things in this world no longer remain for you. All that remains is to be shut up in yourself.

In Jean Paul Sartre's play *No Exit*, four people are in a room they can't leave, and they can't get away from one another. What Sartre presents is the ongoing, endless destruction of each person by the others. Though Sartre was an atheist, his nightmare vision of this process makes substantial sense to me as an image of hell.

**This all sound pretty harsh and confronting. Can you get away with that today?**

In my ministry of preaching to existing congregations, I don't find myself up against people who are explicitly and defiantly making their own happiness the centre of their concern. If I did, then I would say straight to them what I just said straight to you.

But I try to say strong things gently. An old English phrase captures the essence of my presentational style: "Softly, softly catchee monkey." It is supposedly the



J. I. Packer

blessedness will accompany discipleship, but it's got to be God first. Without that, to say that Christianity is the secret of happiness is dangerous.

Often evangelists who preach that way leave the wrong impression and confirm the egocentricity of folk, who then try Christianity as a formula for happiness. God is merciful and sometimes there is a real conversion and real regeneration. But even so, that kind of teaching is likely to produce substandard saints.

You don't actually help the butterfly emerge from its chrysalis by cutting the chrysalis. If the butterfly doesn't struggle from inside to get out, it comes out as a butterfly that isn't strong enough to fly. People who get into the Christian life without every being challenged to repent of their egocentricity are, at

grateful love of a God who saved you, of a Christ who died for you. It means "the things of this world grow strangely dim."

**Is it appropriate to use guilt to motivate people to repent?**

We can't help it. When people wake up to the fact that they've been defying and dishonoring God all these years, they'll feel guilt if the Spirit is working in their hearts.

The next question will be: "How can I get rid of my guilt?" That's when we can talk about, to put it theologically, penal substitution: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. I hear evangelists, especially youth evangelists, say, "People today simply don't respond if you teach guilt and then highlight the Cross



wisdom of an Indian servant in the days of British occupation; he was trying to trap a monkey that was making a nuisance of itself, and he knew the way to catch it was to creep up on it.

Someone said that Charles Finney rode people down with a cavalry charge. Well, I'm not Finney. I set traps for sinners; I try to get them to see the truth by helping them think things through with me, so that they see for themselves that the only right way is the God-centred way.

**We live in a culture in which people demand choices, in everything from candy bars to churches. How can we speak to people in this frame of mind?**

First, the pastor needs to express constantly, in one way or another: "Through my ministry, I trust God is going to speak to you, because my business is simply to let God's Word speak its message through me. And we'll study the Bible together on the matters the Bible treats as central. That's what we as a church have covenanted to do. That agenda is non-negotiable."

Then, in the course of preaching, the pastor has to say in some way: "The only real choice we have is whether we're going to listen to God or not. Are we going to allow him to speak what's on his mind, or are we going to make the rules and allow him to address us only on matters of our choosing?"

**How do you preach from the Bible to people who may not care what it teaches?**

I haven't got a ready-made formula for doing that. All I know is that when people are born again and have a passion to know God and to deepen their relationship with God — just as a chap who's fallen in love has a passion to deepen his relationship with the girl — everything in Scripture then becomes interesting.

I don't know any quick and easy technique of getting people to study the Bible. So I try to preach about the goodness and greatness and glory of God in a way that I hope will generate the passion, but ultimately I can't produce that effect. Only the Holy Spirit can.

**What Bible books can be of most practical help for pastors?**

The pastoral epistles in the New Testament, certainly, and the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament. Billy Graham has read a chapter of Proverbs every day since his ministry started, and it seems to me

that he was absolutely right to do that. Almost without exception he's been able to keep his balance and talk sense about anything people have questioned him on.

The pastor needs to have all that wisdom of the Proverbs in his mind because a great deal of pastoral guidance is a matter of Christian common sense, following

**Theology is food for the hungry soul. What you have in the Bible, very often, is the raw material, the makings of the meal.**

where Proverbs leads.

I'd also add the rest of the Bible's wisdom literature. To echo Oswald Chambers, the Psalms teach you how to pray; Job teaches you how to suffer; the Song of Solomon teaches you how to love; Proverbs teaches you how to live; and Ecclesiastes teaches you how to enjoy. The more the pastor

knows about these books — as well as James, the great New Testament wisdom book — the better.

**What signals that people have moved from self-absorption to growing maturity?**

Maturity was exemplified by the leaders of the church from the first to the 19th centuries, people whom I would characterize as "great souled." There was a sense of stature, a sense of bigness about them that was directly related to the quality of their discipleship. It gave them dignity. It gave them poise and a searching insight. It meant that even when others rubbished or even martyred them, they generated respect.

Sometimes, though, they first generated a robust hatred. Richard Baxter, the 17th century Puritan, was a man of stature who was hated. He got under people's skin simply by his poise, passion and integrity. Just by being a good man, faithfully serving God, he made people feel bad. John Chrysostom is another example, as were Athanasius and Calvin. I could name so many more.

**What role does theology play in this maturing?**

Theology is food for the hungry soul. What you have in the Bible, very often, is the raw material, the makings of the meal. We who preach and teach in our character as theologians are like cooks, and it's our business to shape the meal. Good theology, when we produce it, will come as a meal for the soul.

Look at Luther, Calvin, Barth and Augustine — even at someone as seemingly dry as Charles Hodge in his *Systematic Theology*. Hodge wrote his stuff for the classroom, most of it apologetics. But when he expands on gospel doctrines, he warms up, and it's very good for the soul.

**As you scan the near future, what theological issues will pastors increasingly face?**

We're going to have to fight much more against religious pluralism, the idea that all religions are on a par, that all religions are ways to God. It will take us also a couple of decades to get out of the swamp of what's called postmodernism, where you have

no notion of absolute truth. In the churches, we will have to be constantly speaking against that because God does speak truth.

We also need to recover a true understanding of human life, a sense of the greatness of the soul. We need to recover the awareness that God is more important than we are, that the future life is more important than this one, that happiness is the promise for heaven, that holiness is the priority here in this world, and that nothing in this world is perfect or complete.

That would give people a view of the significance of their lives on a day-to-day basis, which so many, at the moment, lack.

*Dr. James I. Packer has published some 40 books, one of which, Knowing God, has sold nearly two million copies. He teaches at Regent College, Vancouver, B.C., and is assistant rector at St. John's Anglican at Shaughnessy, a Vancouver congregation of 1,100.*

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## Education

## The joys and sorrows of learning

## Bert den Boggende

School was never far away for me. Across my parental home stood a public school. Due to renovations of the Christian school I was to attend. I spent my first year in a classroom of the public school, but there was no contact with its students. Were there practical reasons to keep us separate or was there a Kuyperian idea at work? The next year I went to the renovated Christian school but kept the same teacher.

As part of my principal's training in the mid-1960s I happened to observe her class, but now in a new building. By that time she was close to retirement but still full of enthusiasm. After nearly 40 years of teaching one reading method, she was forced to switch to a newer method, "global reading." And she did as good a job as, if not better than, some of her much younger colleagues.

## A good foundation

Through Christmas and birthday card exchanges — a habit started in grade 1 — I kept contact with her, and in the 1980s I visited her. One of the first things I saw upon entering her room was a framed reading chart with the words which had opened up for me the world of reading (older CC readers who went to school in the Netherlands probably still can recite the "aap, noot, mies.")



Bert den Boggende

Although she recognized the advantages of the global reading method, she wisely stated that if the older method was taught properly it laid just as solid a foundation. Since that visit I have substituted a few times in Grade 1 and thoroughly enjoyed it. I can understand why she was enthusiastic until the end of her career. Although demanding and constantly busy, young students with their infectious behavior cannot but influence the teacher. And if those Grade 1 teachers don't lay the foundation properly, the teachers in the following years have a trou-

blesome task.

A few years ago I was reminded again of my Grade 1 teacher's wise words. The school I was teaching at was faced with the possibility of reducing the staff from two to one, and that teacher would have to teach about a dozen students in Grades 1 through 9. Could I do justice to the students? Could I lay a solid foundation for a Grade 1 student? There was a financial temptation: my salary at that time was about that of a beginning teacher (officially even less), and I had limited savings. Ultimately I gave negative answers to both ques-

tions. As a consequence of that decision I became unemployed, a financially tough situation, but I don't regret my conclusion.

## Historical awareness

In Grade 3, I got a new teacher, a male, and had him again in Grade 4 (and, yes, I still exchange Christmas cards with him). Through his tales he awakened in me an interest in history. Admittedly, the town I grew up in had a number of old buildings and had experienced some notable events. On the one side of my street stood an 18<sup>th</sup> century mill on a part of the old city wall, on the other side stood a late 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholic church, and across from there, a castle, an easy reminder that one of the city's medieval lords had conspired to kill his count. The old city hall had been built in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, while the even older church next to it contained a window commemorating the first Protestant martyr in the Netherlands.

Soon I was reading stories about the Dutch 80-Years War against Spain and of young sailors going to Indonesia (Dutch East Indies). While I still read some Dutch history, mainly through a journal published by Dutch Christian historians, I have broadened my scope over the years. To some extent I had to unlearn what my Grade 3-4 teacher told me, but the interest he awakened is still going strong.

## Something went wrong

I did so well in elementary school that in Grade 6 I got some extra work preparing me for a type of high school (Lyceum) whose diploma would give access to university. Because I was ahead of the class, the teacher-principal asked me frequently to run errands for him, including picking up the teachers' salaries at the treasurer's. Now I rarely walk around with more than \$20 in my wallet; then I bicycled around with some 7,000 guilders in a pouch. Such an action sounds now more like fiction.

Trusted, prepared, eager to study, loving school, ambitious — I had all the ingredients to do well in high school. Yet something went drastically wrong. Explanations could be easily found: daily train travel, difficulties deciphering the scribbling on blackboard (swallowing my pride I got glasses), a somewhat unruly class, unapproachable teachers, etc. Unquestionably, these were contributing factors. But as I realized later, they were not the heart of the problem. My parents, having had

only a Grade 6 education, had no clue what was going on and could not help me. They thought I was too playful and withdrew me from soccer. It didn't help and I failed.

I struggled on for another year and a half, but finally my father decided to have me attend the same local high school my brothers and sisters had attended (MULO). Moreover, after school I had to stay with the school's retired principal who would ensure I had done my homework. He was a hard taskmaster, but one thing became soon apparent under his regime: I had not really learned how to study. I came to realize that studying involved discipline, hard work, going beyond the surface, retaining the material over a long period of time. His bullying tactics helped me pass my grade and later obtain my diploma. While he did not open vistas as my elementary school teachers had done, he taught me a key ingredient of education — discipline.

## A strange mixture

While the high school diploma did not give access to university, I could enter a teachers' college. Even the Christian teachers' college I attended for five years had its share of great and mediocre teachers. For one, it seemed that if you knew professor Waterink's definition of pedagogy (with commas and periods in their proper places) you knew most of what you needed to know about that subject.

A well-meaning, learned and godly minister teaching Old Testament nearly crushed my faith with his joyless presentations resembling the dry bones of Ezekiel 37. Fortunately another minister came to the rescue. He rarely stuck to his subject (dogmatics) and with a leading question he would discuss any aspect, including dogma. Instead of a deadening, literalistic approach he opened up the richness of Scripture. Thank God for such teachers.

Through teachers like this rambling minister I decided to serve Christ in a country where there was a shortage of Christian school teachers. I ended up in Canada in 1967. Unquestionably, some of my own teaching strategies can be regarded as consequences of and reactions to my experiences from kindergarten to teachers' college. Certainly I have attempted to ensure that the students would not experience my failures.

Bert den Boggende lives in Lacombe, Alta.

## TIME FOR NEW FURNITURE?

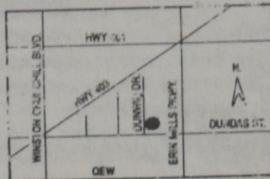
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## Music/Agriculture

## Bad Boys Revisited

Dirk Schouten

Recently I walked into a music store and did something that still surprises me — I bought an AC/DC CD. I've never been a fan of hard rock and, at 30, I'm not about to become one either. But AC/DC has always had a very real, if somewhat strange, presence in my life and I bought the CD for the walk down Memory Lane it would offer. When you live in Asia and you're still single, you'd be surprised what nostalgia can do to you.

I was introduced to AC/DC at 10. The experience terrified me. This was my fate as a Christian elementary school student who believed everything his teachers told him about hard rock. No doubt, these teachers had their agenda. First, we discussed the kinds of messages an AC/DC record could release if played backwards, a discussion bound to include at least one story you could've turned into a "Tales From the Crypt" episode.

Then the teacher brought the issue closer to home. We would hear of a Christian teenager who had heard strange voices while listening to the Bad Boys of Rock 'n Roll. "When?" someone would ask. "It happened last year." "Was he Christian Reformed?" "No, but that doesn't mean he wasn't a Christian." I'm still not sure of the pedagogical value of these lessons, but from them I did learn one thing — shoddy theology is a lot more exciting than the real stuff.

## AC/DC-free

Life at home was AC/DC-free while my older brother and I grew up. But my younger brother thought Phil Collins was for wimps and gave in to the dark side of pop culture. A true rocker, he grew long hair and zits and wore nothing but jeans and unwashed hard rock t-shirts that made him smell like a badger. Alone in his room, he worked tirelessly hooking up amplifiers and speakers, anything to increase the decibel level of his own offerings of "Dirty Deeds," "Go Zone," or "Heat-seeker." He would even interrupt my father, who'd be reading Harry Kuitert — just to dedicate the song to him. "Oh, thank you berry much," Dad would say in his Dutch accent before turning his attention back to a theologian whose ideas are probably twice as dangerous as anything posited by AC/DC. This lasted two years and then, quite suddenly, came to an end. The hard rock albums were put away. The hair was cut. The t-shirts were washed. Little brother had found himself a girlfriend.

At 19, I was at Dordt College, studying Calvin. Like other

students, I was tempted to believe there was nothing to do in Iowa on weekends. But there always was one alternative, that one salvation: the "Pit Party," a bon-fire held in a quarry a safe 10 miles from Dordt's sacred ground. Pit Parties came complete with music, booze, and pretty decent odds that by the end of the night you'd be necking with some Dordt co-ed you didn't know from Adam. No Pit Party could finish without the DJ blasting the night air with AC/DC's "You Shock Me All Night Long," a single which has risen into rock eternity. Writing for the school newspaper, I called the song sexist, only to have a friend remind me that I played it as often as anyone else.

## I needed that

A junior, I wrote a letter to the Rev. Raymond Sikkema, requesting a copy of an article he had written on Deborah, the female Judge. Finishing the letter, I quoted AC/DC. "Have a drink on me, Reverent," I wrote. Sikkema wrote back to point out that I'd forgotten to include the money he'd need for a *slokkie*, but if I were still interested in his ideas I could visit him at his house for a chat and some homemade beer. "You can have a drink on me," he wrote.

That July, I drove out to Sikkema's house in Hamilton. Sure enough, he was waiting for me with what had to be the world's biggest glass of beer. After we seated ourselves on his front patio, he began to talk. And talk. And talk. He did a fine job of wrecking my pro-women-in-office stance while his home-brew wrecked whatever was left of me. But I enjoyed my run-in with the notorious Sikkema. I think I have a notorious rock band to thank for it.

I've listened to my new CD several times, unafraid of strange voices or subliminal messages. And yes, the memories have returned. But even nostalgia cannot be summoned at will, perhaps an indicator that although we shouldn't live for today, we should be living in it. Angus Young's guitar solos, which bounced off the walls of our house years ago, get old in a hurry. It's never long before I'm putting the CD away, whispering: "Thank you berry much," and moving on to bigger and better things.

Dirk Schouten is a teacher of English as a second language in South Korea. He hails from St. Catharines, Ont.

A shepherd looks at  
"A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23"

A book by Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, has dogged my footsteps for years. Acquaintances, new and old, would ask me if I was acquainted with it. I was given copies. Still, I never seemed to be able to get around to reading it. Even when my friend Ron, a fellow sheepman, was reading the book under pursuit by the hound of heaven, I refrained.

Finally, just this week, I read the book and profited from it. But Keller's writing also, in part, confirmed to me why I was reluctant all those years to pick it up to read: being part of a church community with a too prevalent simplistic use of everyday happenings to "illustrate" Scripture even to the point sometimes of illustration-driven sermons. I must admit that I shelved the book when I heard that Mr. Keller subsequently published a book with the far-fetched title, *A Gardener Looks at the Fruit of the Spirit*.

## Stretching the point

Mr. Keller's book is a distillation of learning from a variety of life experiences in the context of Bible teaching. His tome is no lightweight novelty dashed off in hope of sales. The fact, though, that there are in print over a million copies of the book speaks to its enduring value. But here and there the author does stretch an analogy to make a point, or stretch the imagination to cite a theological principle inside an experience.

"Disciplining sheep," for example, is a totally useless concept. Sheep are not a species that profits from any kind of discipline. I believe, however, that Mr. Keller, in reference to "severely disciplining" a sheep that butted lambs not her own, honestly portrayed why none of us shepherds are ever anything close to what the Good Shepherd is. Mr. Keller, unwittingly perhaps, admitted to having given way to his temper and impatience.

I both identify with and regret similar experiences. Sometimes short on patience and time, we lash out at "wrong" and disruptive things a dumb animal might do, and there ends an automatic parallel between shepherders and the Good Shepherd.

## COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE



I do, as did Mr. Keller, profit spiritually from ranch work. I am often made to marvel at my Creator through observation of creatures of his under my care (and I must remind myself of that, too, when tempted to be impatient) in surroundings made by him and adapted by me. I do identify with Keller, too, at times when I am reminded of Scripture by a happening on the farm.

## The shepherd's voice

For example, one fall a number of ewes came down with pink-eye, which can virtually blind sheep for a short time. At the time we were also experiencing foggy weather. One evening the flock had come into the corrals to bed down for the night, but one sheep remained out in the pasture, calling. I went to check, thinking perhaps she had her head stuck in the fence, but there she was lost in the fog because she could not see.

I tried to chase her, but she ran in large circles. Then I noticed she responded to my voice by coming toward me. So I walked back to the corral, talking her in. The experience reminded me of John 10, where Jesus refers to himself as the Good Shepherd and says that his sheep will listen to his voice because they know him.

Word pictures, too, of the Good Shepherd have been very comforting to me. In particular, I often think of Isaiah 40:11: "He tends his flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart...." This was forever imprinted on my mind and heart the summer our son, then 21, lay near death.

Now that I have read *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, I could discuss it with Ron. We could compare notes because he has long since become part of the flock. The pleasant surprise that the book was to me should help me to be more accepting of the efforts of others. I may even look up a copy of *A Gardener Looks at the Fruit of the Spirit*.

Vern Gleddie is a sheep rancher near Edmonton, Alta.



## Comment

## Should we let movies take us for a ride?

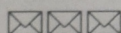
Dear Peter,

I have a confession to make: I'm a movie junkie. I figured this is as good a time as any to come forward, what with all the pre-Oscar hoopla. I don't mean that I only see respectable foreign or art films — I mean I'll go see most of Hollywood's finest. Romantic-comedy, action, sci-fi, drama, epic — if I like the trailer, or I know the actors' or director's work, I'll pay good money to go see it.

This year's Oscar nominations struck me as unusual. I'd seen each of the five films nominated for Best Picture and had already put them in my own Top 10 list of 1998. They're all great films. Historical epics usually get slotted, so the nominations *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Thin Red Line* were expected. One could plunk *Elizabeth* in the historical-epic category as well. Tom Stoppard, co-screenwriter of *Shakespeare in Love*, is an award-winning playwright, so the inclusion of that film is no surprise. *Life is Beautiful* is only the third foreign film ever to be nominated, but it's a sleeper hit.

What I find surprising about the nominations is not why each film was nominated — it's all marketing, anyway — but the group as a whole. Five films about love and war — what conformity! And more so, none of the films have what you would call a "Hollywood ending." Death, war, loss, separation — yes, love, but unrequited love, or love at great cost. The tears are certainly going to flow at this year's Academy Awards ceremony.

Elizabeth



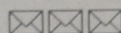
Dear Elizabeth,

I have a confession, too. I find the world of moving pictures to be alluring—like a great big fair with all kinds of glittering rides and shows. I am tantalized by the stories, the beautiful people, and the special effects, yet after awhile, I feel a little ill — like, I don't know, I'm being taken for a ride. I guess I don't like being in the passenger seat and letting someone else take me where I might not want to go. I'm a reluctant movie-goer.

One movie I saw recently (which many thought would be nominated for an Oscar but wasn't) is *The Truman Show* with Jim Carey. There is some love and war in there, but what I found to be more startling was the film's ironic or satirical edge. I felt that the movie was making its own viewers out to be fools. As you watch, you feel like you're participating in your own mockery, for the film denegrates people who live in a TV-show world. They could have ended the movie with the words, "YOU ARE THE JOKE."

Are movies becoming less friendly, more complicated, more reflexive, do you think?

Peter

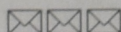


Dear Peter,

I don't know if movies are becoming more reflexive. Certainly there's a lot of social commentary that goes on, and I bet 90 per cent of the audience doesn't get it. Including me. I love the ride and when I come out of the theatre I seldom want to analyze, comment on, and/or otherwise deconstruct what I've seen. I just want to let it wash over me and I go home and say, "Now, wasn't that an experience?" Movies take me on journeys I'd never get to take otherwise.

But as I write this, I know there are people who would want to tell me I'm being indiscriminate and I shouldn't enjoy movies as mere escapism. It's like we're supposed to be more intelligent than the moviemakers, and if we don't find some element of deeper meaning in a movie then, yeah, we are the joke. We've been duped out of eight bucks for 90 minutes of our precious time.

Elizabeth



## Two under 35

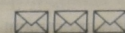


Dear Elizabeth,

Well, I might be one of those annoyingly analytical people. My friends tell me, "It's only entertainment! Relax!" But then I just analyze their remark, "It's only entertainment." What do they mean? That it's not worth thinking about? That there is no meaning in it? That it is, in fact, a meaningless experience? Why do millions of people across North America go on these meaningless rides once, twice, three times a week? What kind of people are we?

I think of the words of the Preacher in Ecclesiastes: "I wanted to see what was worthwhile for people to do under heaven during the few days of their lives." Hmmm. Is he a voice crying in the wilderness, or what?

P.



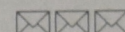
Dear Peter,

The Preacher also says: "Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body." I'd agree with your friends, Peter. You need to relax a little.

What bothers me is this underlying elitism I see in my peers about pop culture. Pop culture is a big part of our lives, but none of us wants to admit we place any value on it. We scoff at it, we're a bit sheepish when we admit which TV shows we do watch, we justify movie-going based on what meaning we can find in a film.

Did you know that Shakespeare's plays, though highly popular in his time, were considered vulgar entertainment by his educated contemporaries? Now that's pop culture with longevity!

E.



Dear Elizabeth,

That's what I mean when I say we're becoming an ironic culture — we denigrate the programs we watch — even as we watch them. It really doesn't make any sense, but I guess that's not really a concern anymore.

As for the longevity of pop culture, I can't really see the Spice Girls or *Armageddon* even making it into the next millenium. But maybe *Saving Private Ryan* or *Life is Beautiful* will be around for a couple more decades. Spielberg might have something more in common with Shakespeare than just the letter "S."

P.S. I heard that the Oscars were started by a Canadian working in the Hollywood film industry. That, like giving awards to foreign films, makes it less of an exclusively American event.

P.



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Elizabeth Salomons is a freelance writer who lives in Vancouver. Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed Church's chaplain at Brock University. He's a member of Jubilee CRC in St. Catharines, Ont.



## News Comment

## Nose for News



Bert Hielema

AMSTERDAM IS IN the news. Whether it is good or bad news, you be the judge. The Dutch Parliament is giving the green light to make the red light district legal. This act will at the same time transforms the meaning of window shopping. The brothel bosses of Amsterdam will now be officially known as "The Association of Owners of Window Companies," and it wants its operators no longer be known as pimps but much more officially as "entrepreneurs in the relaxation industry."

Most *Christian Courier* readers probably do not know this, but in Amsterdam in *de Walle* district curious and sex-hungry people can see prostitutes perched provocatively and perhaps precariously in eye-level windows. "Legalizing this activity," says Klaas Wiltink, the police spokesman, "will practically eliminate street prostitution and so reduce the number of victims of violence." Asked if legal recognition would give prostitution undue legitimacy and social acceptance, Wiltink replied, "Why shouldn't you see this as a normal job? This way the ladies have to pay taxes, keep up their insurance and social security and have to be registered with the chamber of commerce."

THIS STORY REMINDS me of Clinton: I saw in the *Los Angeles Times* an article in which a Jewish scholar compared the sin of David over against Bathsheba with the sin of Saul over against Agag, the king of the Amalekites. David, as we will remember, had Bathsheba's legal husband killed so he could marry this woman, who later became Solomon's mother. Although David was punished, he was not "impeached," i.e., he did not lose his throne because of this act of adultery and murder, since it was not a crime against the State.

Saul, however, lost his kingship forever when he failed to kill Agag, who was a person like Hitler or Saddam Hussein, an enemy of

the State of Israel. Based on these grounds, said this Jewish doctor of law, Bill Clinton, too, should not lose his job. Makes sense to me. I may add that George Bush, who stopped short of capturing Hussein when he had the opportunity during the Gulf War, could have committed an impeachable offence.

A GREATER CONTRAST is hardly possible. Here is one nation, Japan, where people have so much money in the bank — an average of \$100,000 per person on which they get hardly any interest — yet their government is handing out cash certificates to families with children under 15 and old folks. Some 35 million in all are eligible to receive these vouchers which have a value of about \$250 (Can). The Tokyo government is desperate to prod tight-fisted and frugal Japanese to go on a spending spree and so pull the economy out of recession. Massive tax cuts did not do the trick. Record deficit spending on roads to nowhere and on bridges everywhere, did not help.

A greater contrast with the USA is hardly possible: there consumer spending is going hay-wire with people robbing their meagre piggy banks to buy bigger TVs, bigger cars, bigger houses and act in general as if there is only one way to handle money: spend it as soon as you have it, never mind tomorrow. What will tomorrow bring?

I AM NOT AN EXPERT, but in Davos Switzerland, each year, the big shots of the world come together to connect and have communal tea-leaves-reading sessions. Chretien stopped in, and so did Al Gore. The five-day stay cost you about \$10,000. The top business gurus attend and give seminars on all sorts of matters, including their ideas what is in store for the ensuing year.

Let me quote you a sentence: "Japan will have three more years of recession and its debt will double in seven years. This, combined with dubious bank lending in the

entire Western world, could cause a contraction — a softer word meaning depression — worse than the 1930s." Not my words. I am just repeating what the world's leading citizens were told at the World Economic Conference.

I HAVE MENTIONED genetics before. A Nobel Prize-winning geneticist, Francois Jacob, has written a book, *Of Flies, Mice and Men*, (translated from the French) in which he describes, among other matters, depictions of the Last Judgment as visualized by Hieronymus Bosch, a medieval Dutch painter who died in 1516.

The Hell he shows us is peopled with the most frightening monsters Bosch could imagine. And the most horrible of these creatures, those charged with torturing sinners, are also the most unnatural hybrids: revolting mixtures of fish and dog, rat and insect, man and bird.

For Bosch, the best way of instilling fear was to place side by side, as by contrast, the disorder of the imaginary world into the order of ordinary life. Genetic engineering, where genes of one sort of living entity is injected into another, evokes this sort of nightmare.

Says Dr Jacob: "Bosch reminds us of Prometheus, punished for having stolen the fire of the gods." He continues: "Most outrageous is that it is so easy to tinker with the substance that is at the very root of life; that it is so simple to play with what is still the most marvellous story and the most disconcerting problem in the world, which is the formation of a human being... (which grows) to allow the being to speak, to write, to count, to play the violin, to cross the street between cars, to paint, to write a book."

"Inside this little mass of cells are algebra and music, syntax and semantics, geometry and counterpoint. Is it possible to imagine a more fantastic story?" My comment: I have long thought that when we start to tamper with us humans and change the very nature of God's image, then the return of the Lord cannot be far off. This book affirms my suspicion.

TALK ABOUT GENETICS: Monsanto is the company in the forefront of genetically engineered seeds. The newest ones can be designed to have a sterility factor in them. This is done for the simple reason to force farmers to buy new seeds every year, rather than use a portion of last year's crop. I presume this is a good capitalistic

invention. When the plants mature the seeds they carry will lose the ability to reproduce.

Time magazine calls them "the suicide seeds." Monsanto — the name could mean "my health" — is more aptly renamed "Mon-morte" or "my death" as the possibility exists that pollen from the "Terminator" plant — yes, that is the name the company gave them — could drift with the wind like a toxic cloud, cross with ordinary crops or wild plants and spread from species to species until flora all around the world have suddenly and irreversibly been sterilized. A scary possibility. No wonder that there is a growing opposition to Monsanto. Tests done in Holland have shown that genetically altered foods stay longer in the dietary tract than the company claims.

I AM DESPERATELY trying to inject a good news item. Well, here is one ... sort of. Iacocca, already long retired and, since then on his third marriage, was more successful as the designer of the famous Mustang Car and later led Chrysler to a victorious comeback. He now wants to be back in the wheel business: two wheels this time: an electric bike. A bicycle that will go 32 km on one charge and longer if you pedal. The price: around 1 grand (US). So now, in addition to e-mail we will have e-bikes. Just plug into any outlet for 4 hours and presto, ready

for another trip. Maximum speed 24 clicks.

SPYING HAS BECOME A lot easier. We no longer have to be undercover and become a mole — a person buried into enemy territory for a long time in order to win the trust of the opponent. No, the Internet is now fertile territory to ferret out secrets. Now companies specialize in scanning the worldwide-web-[www](http://www), and discover many an intelligence nugget.

The foremost pioneer in this field is a company called Stratfor: [www.stratfor.com](http://www.stratfor.com). Based on its surfing the world, this firm predicts for 1999 a crisis in Ukraine as well as new fears about Russia, where reform is failing and nationalists and communists are in charge.

In connection with Iraq, this outfit with a staff of 22 maintains that the bomb attacks were actually designed to mask a failed U.S.-backed coup. Stratfor argued that Saddam's lightning restructuring of the Iraqi military, followed by executions of the army's Third Corps commanders, was evidence that the coup had been suppressed.

*Bert Hielema has no secret sources: he culls most of his news items from the newspapers and magazines Canada Post delivers to his rural mailbox on Highway # 37 north of Tweed, Ont. He occasionally consults the Internet as well.*

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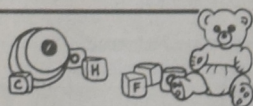
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## Births

**SCHOLTEN:**

Ron and Vicki (Oswin) thank God for the safe arrival of their precious son **BRANDON WILLIAM JACOB**

On Dec. 18, 1998, weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz. Proud grandparents are Pat and Ralph Scholten of Bradford and Marilyn and Gary Oswin of Schomberg. Brandon is also another great-grandchild for Karen Scholten of Brampton.

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## Anniversaries



*Congratulations to Hank and Joan Westerveld on your 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary! With love from your family.*

Op 29 januari, 1999, was het 55 jaar geleden dat onze ouders en grootouders

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in het huwelijk zijn getreden. Om gezondheidsredenen werd het feest gevierd in de familiekring.

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Peter & Barb — London, Ont.  
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The children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of

**PETER and CLAIRE SPOELSTRA**

(nee ELGERSMA)

announce with joy and thanksgiving the 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of Mom and Dad, Grammy and Opa, on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999.

We thank and praise our faithful God for his constant presence in their lives.

Betty Spoelstra — Hamilton  
 Ray & Shirley Spoelstra — Binbrook  
 Tena & Jerry Groen — Hamilton  
 Stuart Spoelstra — Belleville

Fred & Fran Spoelstra — Ancaster  
 Paul & Henny Spoelstra — Lynden  
 Ruth & John Hensen — Brantford

Wendy & Jack Van Dyk — Millgrove  
 Peter & Dana Spoelstra — London  
 28 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren

Please share this celebration at an Open House in the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church, 61 Mohawk Rd. W., Hamilton, Ont., on Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, from 3 - 6 p.m.

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Aalten Terra Cotta  
 the Neth. Ont.  
 1949 March 24 1999

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go." (Gen. 28:15a)  
 With happiness and gratitude to God, we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our parents and grandparents

**HANK and JOAN WESTERVELD**

(nee RENSINK)

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Nathan, Michael, Steven, Daryl  
 Herb & Michele Westerveld —  
 Terra Cotta, Ont.

Lisa, Paul, Tina  
 Dave Westerveld — Terra Cotta, Ont.

Open house will be held on March 20, 1999, from 2 - 5 p.m., at the Georgetown Christian Reformed Church, 11611 Trafalgar Rd., Georgetown.

Best wishes only!  
 Home address:

15739 Winston Churchill Blvd.,  
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## Obituaries

's Hertogenbosch Holland Landing  
 the Neth. Ont.

Feb. 22, 1928 - Feb. 9, 1999

"Jesus said, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die.'" (John 11:25-27)

On Tuesday February 9, 1999, our Lord quietly called

**JOHN WILLIAM BAKKER**

from his earthly home, to go to his home in glory.

Cherished husband of Juliana (DeKoning) and his first wife, Johanna (1987).

Loving and dedicated father and friend of:

John Wm. (1987)  
 Joanne & Jerry Bekendam

Stephanie, Steven, Michael, Kenneth

Paul & Debbie Bakker

Adam

Kathy & Ron Lamain

Monica, Robert, Rebecca, Jack

Len & Cory Bakker

Cassia, Felicia

Beloved friend and step-dad to:

Augusta & Dick Planting

Jason, Ken, Matthew, Ashley

Wilma Sharpe

Paul, Daniel, Julie

Julie & Harvey Beishuizen

Rachel, David

Pete & Adelaide DeKoning

David, Daren, Stephanie

Ken & Sylvia DeKoning

Luke, Stefan

Wendy & Joe Maiuri

Nikita

A dear brother to Paul (1985) & Aartje and Roel & Ans in the Netherlands.

John was very much loved as a step-brother, brother-in-law, uncle, and a friend to many. He truly was his brother's keeper, always caring about others. He will be greatly missed by all.

Correspondence addresses:

Juliana Bakker, 29 Amberglen Court, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1J6 or Joanne Bekendam, 181 Jerseyville Rd., Brantford, ON N3T 5M1

## Obituaries

Vlist Alliston  
 the Neth. Ont.

April 17, 1915 - February 21, 1999

Our heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom, took unto Himself our husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather

**PETER (PIET) SCHEP**

in his 84<sup>th</sup> year.

Husband of Willemina Schep-Mounik. He was predeceased by his daughter, Audrey, in 1952.

Father of:

Arie & Judy Schep — Guelph, Ont.  
 Debbie & Arnold (Michael & Ashley), Suzanne & Terry (Douglas, Joshua), Robin & Mike (Matthew, Jason)

Willy & Ralph Hollema — Alliston, Ont.

Rick & Brandy (Colten, Jacob, Hailey), Harry, Christine (Richard), Peter & Denise (Arianna), Elaine

Diane & John Van Campen — Utopia, Ont.

Audrey & Neil (Brianne), Maureen, Mark & Sylvia (Andrew), Jonathan, Jeff

Nel & John Geddes — London, Ont.

Jenn, Carrie

Janet & Ted Vandevs — Barrie, Ont.

Brad, Karen

Betty Ann & Don Duggan — Alliston, Ont.

Amanda, Sacha, Micheal

Survived by one brother, one sister, and predeceased by three brothers, two sisters, all in the Netherlands.

Correspondence address: 358 Albert St. E., Alliston, ON L9R 1J8

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our dear mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother,

**ELIZABETH (LIJSJE) SCHINKEL**

(nee VAN IEPEREN)

on February 10, 1999, in her 100<sup>th</sup> year.

Dear wife of the late Teunis Schinkel (1983).

She was born in the Netherlands on March 7, 1899, the oldest of seven children. She and her family endured the rigors of the Depression and two world wars and immigrated to Canada in 1953. She endeared herself not only to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but also will be remembered by many whose lives she touched during her stay here on earth. We celebrated her long life with the knowledge that she looked forward to eternity where she will sing praises before God's throne. We will remember her tenderly. Survived by her sons and daughters:

Johanna & John Vaandering — Brantford

Tiny Koowijk — the Netherlands

Bill & Corrie Schinkel — Hamilton

Corrie & John Lammers — Kitchener

Joe & Bessie Schinkel — Carcross, Yukon

Gerry & Ruth Schinkel — Essex

Herman & Tena Schinkel — Chatham

Ben & Winny Schinkel — Essex

Elizabeth Schinkel — Belgium

Willie & Ollie Hiemstra — London

Also survived by 45 grandchildren and 102 great-grandchildren.

Funeral service and burial took place on Saturday, February 13, 1999, in Chatham, Ont.

Correspondence address:

J. Vaandering, 91 Royal Oak Dr., Brantford, ON N3R 7P8





## Classifieds

Obituaries	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
<p>"The ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." (Isaiah 51:11)</p> <p><b>NEELTJE TRIEMSTRA</b></p> <p>entered into glory on Tuesday, February 9, 1999. The Lord's mercy accompanied her for 92 years. Beloved wife of the late Rindert Triemstra.</p> <p>Dear mother and grandmother of: Vic &amp; Jane Triemstra — Barrie, Ont. Nellie, Anita &amp; Dave, Kevin &amp; Kim, Jason &amp; Caroline John &amp; Alice Triemstra Ron &amp; Hilma, John &amp; Thalya, Monica &amp; Dave, Sylvia &amp; Dan Dick &amp; Nellie Romp — Onllia, Ont. Henry &amp; Michele, Lisa &amp; Don, Frank, Christa &amp; Ivan</p> <p>Also lovingly remembered by 24 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Funeral service was held on February 12, 1999, at the First Christian Reformed Church in Barrie, Ont. Pastor Peter Kranenburg officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Vic Triemstra, 517 Big Bay Point Rd., Barrie, ON L4N 3Z6</p>	<p><b>PORT PERRY, Ont.: Scugog Christian School</b> invites candidates to apply for a <b>possible opening at the junior level</b> as well as an opening for a <b>maternity leave at the primary level</b>. The maternity leave position will begin approximately at the end of September/mid-October 1999 until March/early April 2000. <b>Strengths in French and Music will be an asset</b>. Scugog Christian School is a non-denominational school in a pleasant rural setting, but within easy driving distance of Toronto. We anticipate an enrolment of about 80 pupils for next year. If you would like to become a part of our team, please forward your resume to:</p> <p><b>John Lunshof, Principal,</b> Scugog Christian School, P.O. Box 3308, Prince Albert, ON L9L 1C3</p> <p><b>METCALFE, Ont.: Community Christian School</b> (1/2 hour south of Ottawa) requires <b>one full-time and one part-time teacher</b> for the 1999-2000 school year to replace on leave. Please contact:</p> <p><b>Beth Ripmeester, Principal,</b> Phone/Fax: (613) 821-3669</p> <p>Resume, statement of faith/philosophy of education may be sent to 2681 Glen St., Metcalfe, ON K0A 2P0.</p>	<p><b>CAMBRIDGE, Ont.: Cambridge Christian School</b> invites applications to fill a <b>one year vacancy in the Grade 2 classroom</b>. Please send a letter of application and resume to:</p> <p><b>Andy Vander Ploeg, Principal</b> Cambridge Christian School 229 Myers Rd., Cambridge, ON N1R 7H3 Phone: (519) 623-2261, Fax: (519) 623-4042. Application deadline: March 19, 1999.</p> <p><b>DUNNVILLE, Ont.: Dunnville Christian School</b> invites candidates to apply for a definite opening in <b>Grades 4/5 for the 1999-2000 school year</b>. The ability to <b>teach French</b> at this level is a requirement. Strengths in <b>Music and Physical Education</b> will be regarded as an asset. D.C.S. is a well established, non-denominational school, and situated in a rural setting, but close to urban areas. As a very supportive, active community, we offer a program that includes a challenging curriculum, a library, a professional Special Education program, a gymnasium, a strong parent-volunteer program, and extensive extra-curricular activities. If you would like to become part of a vibrant team with a mix of young and young-at-heart colleagues who are committed to provide high quality Christian education, please forward your resume to the principal:</p> <p><b>Mr. Arie J. Vanderstoel</b> Dunnville Christian School R.R.#1, Robinson Rd., Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1 Phone: (905) 774-5142, Fax: (905) 774-5519 e-mail: arievon@mergetel.com</p>	<p><b>JARVIS, Ont.: Jarvis District Christian School</b> is in need of a <b>Grade 5 teacher</b>, effective March 22, 1999, through June 30, 1999. This will likely continue for the 1999-2000 year as well (however, at the Grade 6 level). Strengths/interests particularly in the areas of Computer and French would be welcomed, but not necessarily required. Moreover, in September, 1999, we will also be in need of <b>two full-time teachers</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>full-time Resource/Special Education teacher</b>. The successful applicant will be in charge of the school's resource program and will play a key role in helping classroom teachers meet children's needs, as well as working with small groups and individuals.</li> <li>• <b>Grade 7 classroom teacher</b>. This will involve some rotation into the Grade 8 classroom. Strengths/interests in the areas of science, math and PE will be preferred; ability to teach French and computer class will also be helpful. This position may also include serving as the school's computer coordinator.</li> </ul> <p>JDCS is located in a small town, approximately 40 min. south of Hamilton. We have a total staff of eleven (including two part-time), as well as a current enrolment of 208 pupils. Please send all letters of application, resume, a brief statement of your philosophy of Christian education and other pertinent materials to:</p> <p><b>Garry Glasbergen, Principal</b> Jarvis District Christian School P.O. Box 520, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0 School phone: (519) 587-4444, School Fax: (519) 587-2985, home phone: (905) 765-7919.</p>	<p><b>WOODBIDGE, Ont.: Toronto District Christian High School</b> invites applications for a <b>science (physics, biology) position</b> and an <b>English position</b>. These two full-time positions <b>begin August 1, 1999</b>. Please send resume, credentials and statement of faith to:</p> <p><b>Ren Siebenga</b> c/o Toronto District Christian High School 377 Woodbridge Avenue Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8</p> <p><b>WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Christian School</b> may have <b>two full-time positions</b> opening for the coming school year. The positions in question are at the <b>junior and intermediate levels</b>. Strong interests and credentials in <b>Science, Music, French, Art, or Computers</b> are an asset. If you desire to become part of a cohesive faculty, working with a supportive community, please send your resume including your personal beliefs about Christian education to:</p> <p><b>Mr. Wm. Barneveld, Principal,</b> John Knox Christian School, 800 Juliana Drive, P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, Ont., N4S 7W8</p>
<p><b>ELIZABETH WESTSTEYN</b></p> <p>passed away peacefully at Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont. On February 12, 1999, in her 92<sup>nd</sup> year. Beloved wife of the late Peter Weststeyn.</p> <p>Dear mother and mother-in-law of: Joan &amp; Haddy Smedema Cory &amp; Ralph Vos Ankie &amp; the late Archie Weststeyn Ineke &amp; Herbert Jansen</p> <p>Dear grandmother of Janet &amp; Bert, Elizabeth, Peter &amp; Angela, Julia, Henry, Lisa, Amo &amp; Helen, Perry &amp; Tania, Allison &amp; Derek, Elizabeth &amp; John, Kim, Susan, Nicholas.</p> <p>Dear great-grandmother of Joe, Becky, Susanne, Tom, Matthew, Rachel, Sarah, Heather, Alex, Aryn.</p> <p>Dear sister of Catrien and Mies, and the late Henny, all of the Netherlands. A memorial service was held February 15, 1999, at the Christian Reformed Church in Georgetown, Ont. Interim at the Georgetown Greenwood Cemetery.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Joan Smedema, 50 River Dr., Georgetown, ON L7G 2J2</p>	<p><b>BURLINGTON, Ont.: Trinity Christian School</b> invites applications for a <b>full-time Grade 7 teacher, beginning September 1999</b>. Applicants need to demonstrate a love for God, students and Christian education. Computer literacy would be considered an asset. Deadline for application is <b>March 11, 1999</b>. If you are interested in joining a dedicated Christian staff in a growing Christian school community, please send your resume to:</p> <p><b>Mr. Andrew Straatsma, Principal</b> Trinity Christian School 650 Walkers Line Burlington, ON L7N 2E7 Tel.: (905) 634-3052 Fax: (905) 634-9382.</p>	<p><b>KITCHENER, Ont.: Laurentian Hills Chr. School</b>, located in beautiful, centrally located Kitchener, Ont., invites applications for a <b>possible position in the upper elementary level</b>. LHCS has grown to 200+ students, a staff of 12 full- and part-time teachers, and will be adding a new primary wing to its facilities this spring. Applicants need to be qualified teachers who demonstrate a love for God, a love for senior students and love for teaching. Please direct all inquiries and resumes identifying specific strengths and interests to:</p> <p><b>Luke Janssen, Principal</b> Laurentian Hills Chr. School 11 Laurentian Dr. Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1</p>	<p><b>OAKVILLE, Ont.: Oakville Christian School</b> requires a teacher for a <b>Senior Kindergarten</b> maternity leave, <b>mid-April to June, 1999</b>. A <b>primary teaching position exists for September, 1999</b>, as well as possible vacancies at other grade levels. Consider joining a team of caring and dedicated Christian educators. Send your resume, statement of faith and letter of application to the principal ASAP or call (905) 825-1247.</p> <p><b>Mr. Herb Goodhoofd</b> Oakville Christian School 112 Third Line, Oakville, ON L6L 3Z6</p>	<p><b>WYOMING, Ont.: John Knox Christian School</b> has an opening in one of the <b>Junior Grades</b> for one year, beginning September 1999. Please send your resumes, etc. to:</p> <p><b>William Hordyk, Principal</b> Box 81, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0 Phone: (519) 845-3112, Fax: (519) 845-3112.</p> <p><b>LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Christian School</b>, approximately 386 students in K-9, located in Central Alberta, invites applications from qualified teachers for a <b>Grade 6 position</b>. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume to:</p> <p><b>Martin Folkerts</b> Lacombe Christian School, 5206-58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9 Phone: (403) 782-6531, Fax: (403) 782-5760.</p>
<p><b>Personal</b></p> <p><b>Retired Dutch Canadian widower</b>, 63, United Reformed, would like to meet <b>Christian lady</b>, southern Ontario. Please send letters to <b>File #2687, c/o Christian Courier</b>, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.</p> <p><b>For a quick Letter to the Editor, send e-mail to: cceditor@aol.com or fax to (905) 682-8313.</b></p>	<p><b>CHATHAM, Ont.: since 1957, the Chatham Christian Schools</b> have offered Christ-centred and academically excellent Christian education to families in Chatham-Kent. In <b>September, 1999, the Chatham Christian Schools will move into a new K-12 facility with 350 students</b>. The school will be fully networked and will feature a brand new computer lab. We are currently accepting applications for a <b>computer specialist</b>. The job will include <b>teaching high school (70%) and maintenance of the network (30%)</b>. The successful candidate will hold a degree in secondary education with a strong background in computers, and a working knowledge of Windows NT. Our goal is to fill this position in time to enable this teacher to be <b>involved in the installation of the network this summer</b>. If you are interested in joining this exciting new venture, we invite you to submit an application to:</p> <p><b>John Van Pelt, Principal</b> Chatham Christian High School 90 Park Avenue East, Chatham, ON N7M 3V4 Phone: (519) 352-4591, Fax: (519) 352-3476.</p>	<p><b>NEWMARKET, Ont.: Holland Marsh District Christian School</b> near Newmarket, Ontario, has <b>possible openings throughout the grades for the 1999-2000 school year</b>. If you have a strong practical faith and believe in serving God and others in every area of life, and if you are interested in being part of our team in a "growing" environment, please contact:</p> <p><b>Henry Lise, Principal</b> Phone: (905) 775-3701, Fax: (905) 775-2395 18955 Dufferin St., R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9 e-mail: hmdcs@neptune.on.ca; web-site: www.neptune.on.ca/~hmdcs</p>	<p><b>THUNDER BAY, Ont.: Thunder Bay Christian School</b> invites applications for possible openings in <b>Grades K-9</b>. Send resume to:</p> <p><b>Thunder Bay Christian School</b> R.R.#2, Arthur St. W., Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1 or Fax: (807) 939-2843.</p> <p><b>TRENTON, Ont.: Trenton Christian School</b> invites applications for qualified teachers for possible openings in the <b>junior Grades</b> effective September 1999. Strengths in Music or Science will be an asset. Please send letter of application, resumes, inquiries, etc. to:</p> <p><b>Ike Witteveen, Principal</b> Trenton Christian School 20 Fourth Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N3 Phone: (613) 392-3600, Fax: (613) 392-6316 e-mail: tcs@reach.net</p>	<p><b>MAPLE RIDGE, B.C.: Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School</b> is now inviting candidates to apply for a <b>full-time secondary position</b> beginning in Sept. 1999. Previous teaching experience and strengths in science, physical education, humanities or the fine arts would be an asset. <b>Qualified part-time applicants in the mentioned areas of expertise would be welcomed</b>. Join an energetic, young Middle/High School team in a well-established Christian school. Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School is located 45 min. east of Vancouver in the city of Maple Ridge. Send resumes to:</p> <p><b>Mr. Rod Berg, Principal</b> Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School 12140 203<sup>rd</sup> Street Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4V5</p>



## Classifieds

Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Church News
<p><b>ATHENS, Ont.:</b> Athens Christian School is seeking applications for a <b>maternity leave position</b> in our <b>Grades 5-8 classroom</b> with 20 students. No teaching of French or Music is required. For 25% of the time, the teacher has only double grades. Position available <b>May 1 to the end of June and September to mid-November of 1999</b>. Applications considered for the spring or fall openings, or both. Please send resume with philosophy of education and statement of faith to:</p> <p><b>Mrs. Jannie Feenstra,</b> Administrator Athens Christian School P.O. Box 264, Athens, ON K0E 1B0 Phone (613) 924-9500, Fax (613) 924-1148.</p>	<p><b>HAMILTON, Ont.:</b> Calvin Christian School is accepting applications from Christian teachers for placement in the <b>upper primary and junior grades</b> for the <b>school year 1999-2000</b>. Strengths in teaching <b>music and/or integrating computers</b> will be considered as assets. <b>Application deadline is March 22, 1999</b>. Please forward a resume with a statement of faith and your philosophy of Christian education to:</p> <p><b>Ted Postma, Principal</b> Calvin Christian School 547 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7 Phone: (905) 388-2645 Fax: (905) 388-2769 E-mail: ccs.edu@sympatico.ca</p>	<p><b>SARNIA, Ont.:</b> Lambton Christian High School, located in Samia, Ont., requests invitations to apply for possible vacancies in the following areas: <b>French, Art, Mathematics, Computers, the Social Sciences and Physical Education</b>. Please send your resume and a brief statement of your philosophy of education to:</p> <p><b>The Principal,</b> Lambton Christian High School, 295 Essex St., Sarnia, ON N7T 7H3 Phone: (519) 337-9122 Fax: (519) 337-2541 E-mail: lch@tct.net</p>	<p><b>VANCOUVER, B.C.:</b> Vancouver Chr. School, a denominationally diverse community which offers Kindergarten through Grade 10, will have an opening for a <b>Grade 9 and 10 Humanities position</b> for the 1999/2000 school year. Deadline for replies is March 15. Please send your resume to:</p> <p><b>Ellen Freestone, Acting Principal</b> Vancouver Chr. School 3496 Mons Drive Vancouver, BC V5M 3E6 No applications by fax, please.</p>	<p><b>Classis Chatham</b> will meet in regular session on Tuesday, May 11, 1999, in the <b>Good News CRC, London, Ont.</b> All materials for the agenda must reach the stated clerk by <b>Monday, March 29, 1999</b>. Jan H.G. Vandergeest, Stated Clerk</p>
			<p><b>Job Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Classis Huron</b>, at its January 13, 1999, meeting, declared <b>Mr. Vic VanderMolen</b> eligible for a call after he successfully sustained the examination to be admitted to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church of NA by way of Article 7 of the Church Order. This decision was made with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies from Classis Toronto, Hamilton, and Niagara.</p>
<p><b>BARRIE, Ont.:</b> Timothy Chr. School is soliciting resumes for possible <b>teaching positions opening in senior elementary</b> with a need for expertise in computers, lower primary with preference given to educators trained in F.S.L. and a <b>definite part-time position in special education</b>. If you are interested in becoming part of a collegial, growing staff and have a passion for sharing your faith with children, please direct your resume to:</p> <p><b>Mrs. Jane Tjeerdsma</b> c/o Timothy Chr. School 49 Ferris Lane Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1 Phone: (705) 726-6621 Fax: (705) 726-8571</p> <p>Only plausible candidates will be contacted. This application period will close on March 5, 1999.</p>	<p><b>REXDALE (TORONTO), Ont.:</b> Timothy Christian School is accepting applications for a possible <b>part-time position in the junior grades</b>. Please forward a resume including a philosophy of Christian education to:</p> <p><b>Mrs. C. Jonker</b> Timothy Christian School 28 Elmhurst Drive Rexdale, ON M9W 2J5 Phone: (416) 741-5770 Fax: (416) 741-3359</p>	<p><b>TORONTO, Ont.:</b> Willowdale Christian School invites applications for a possible <b>teaching position vacancy</b>. Candidates holding a <b>CSTC will be given preference</b>. Please address your questions or your letter of application and resume along with a statement of faith and your philosophy of education to:</p> <p><b>Mrs. C. Bootsma, Principal</b> Willowdale Christian School 60 Hilda Avenue North York, ON M2M 1V5 Phone: (416) 222-1711 Fax: (416) 222-1939</p>	<p><b>NURSERY/GREENHOUSE HELP:</b> Wholesale nursery, growing ground covers, flowering shrubs, evergreens, flowering vines and perennial flowers, will be hiring additional staff for spring. Employment is needed in potting, tagging, shipping, tying and propagation. Work involves both being inside and outside. <b>Full-time and seasonal employment.</b> Wages and positions commensurate with experience. Resumes may be dropped off at <b>Willowbrook Nurseries Inc., 1000 Balfour Street, Fenwick, Ont., to the attention of Jane Broere between the hours of 8:00 and 4:30 Monday to Friday.</b> No phone calls please.</p>	<p><b>Community CRC, Kitchener, Ont.</b> heartily recommends the churches to consider <b>Mr. VanderMolen</b> for a call. He may be contacted at <b>112 Admiral Road, Kitchener, ON N2M 1R1, or by telephone at (519) 743-4561.</b></p>
	<p><b>ST. CATHARINES, Ont.:</b> Beacon Christian High School invites applications for an opening in <b>Science and English</b> for the 1999-2000 school year. We are seeking teachers who can show a love for God, for students, and for their field of study. Experience the joy of working with students in a small Christian high school atmosphere with smaller class sizes. The successful <b>science candidate will have a biology/chemistry background</b>. Please send resume and letter of application to:</p> <p><b>Ted Harris, Principal</b> Beacon Christian High School 2 O'Malley Drive St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7 Fax: (905) 937-1130</p>	<p><b>RED DEER, Alta.:</b> The Red Deer Christian School is looking for teachers for the 1999-2000 school year, who are dedicated, dynamic, and committed to educating students for joyful service. We expect to have openings in <b>Grade two and Grade seven (band, music, and drama)</b>. The successful applicants will <b>qualify for Alberta certification</b> and join a Christ-centered learning community made up of 15 staff, 200+ students (ECS-9), and many committed parents and supporters. Please direct all inquiries and resumes to:</p> <p><b>Bob Barthel, Principal</b> Red Deer Christian School 5210 - 61st Street Red Deer, AB T4N 6N8 Phone: (403) 346-5795 Fax: (403) 347-3003</p>	<p><b>Second Christian Reformed Church of Abbotsford</b> is seeking a <b>part-time music and worship co-ordinator</b> to work with the pastors and worship committee to recruit and train members of the congregation for increased participation and leadership in music and worship. Appreciation of the Reformed tradition and CRC Psalter Hymnal and familiarity with contemporary praise music are important. Salary is negotiable. Detailed job description is available upon request. Direct inquiries and/or submit applications to:</p> <p><b>The Worship Committee of Second Christian Ref. Church</b> 34631 Old Clayburn Road Abbotsford, BC V2S 4H5 Phone: (604) 853-6151</p>	<p><b>Classis Niagara</b>, with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies, has established the need for Rehoboth CRC, Niagara Falls, Ont., to call <b>Dr. Andre Basson</b> of the South African Dutch Reformed Church. The classical examination is scheduled for a special meeting of Classis Niagara, <b>Wednesday, April 7 at 7:30 p.m. at the Rehoboth CRC, in Niagara Falls, Ont.</b> John TeBrake, Stated Clerk</p>
<p><b>BOWMANVILLE, Ont.:</b> Durham Christian High School is inviting applications for possible teaching positions in the following subject areas: <b>French, Girls P.E., Computer Science, Art, Business, Mathematics</b>. Located in the eastern corner of the Greater Toronto Area. Resumes and inquiries to:</p> <p><b>Fred Spoelstra, Principal</b> Durham Christian High School 340 Scugog Street, R.R. #1 Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2 Phone: (905) 623-5940 Fax: (905) 623-6258 E-mail: dchs@ican.net</p>	<p><b>WELLANDPORT, Ont.:</b> Wellandport Christian School invites applications for 1999-2000 school year for the following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French Instructor 60% position (Grades 4-8)</li> <li>• Classroom teacher 40% position (Primary grade)</li> <li>- both the above are 1 year contracts (maternity leave)</li> <li>- positions can be combined to make one</li> <li>• Possible full-time opening in intermediate grades</li> <li>• Computer or physical education expertise</li> </ul> <p>Wellandport Christian School, established over 40 years ago, with a staff of 15 and a student enrollment of 255, is located in the heart of the Niagara Peninsula. Direct enquiries to:</p> <p><b>W. Thies, Principal</b> Wellandport Christian School 84008 Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0 Phone: (905) 386-6272 Fax: (905) 386-7184</p>	<p><b>HOUSTON, B.C.:</b> Houston Christian School invites applications from teachers for a possible <b>elementary teaching position</b> for the 1999-2000 school year. The specific class assignment cannot be determined until the plans of our current teachers for the next school year become definite near the end of March. We expect about 80-85 students in Grade K-6 in September. Houston is a forestry-based community of about 5,000 people. Our students attend four local churches: Baptist, Canadian Reformed, Christian Reformed and Pentecostal. Resumes and inquiries will be welcomed by:</p> <p><b>Jack VandenBorn, Principal,</b> Houston Christian School, Box 237, Houston, B.C. V0J 1Z0 Phone: (250) 845-7736 Fax: (250) 845-7738 e-mail: hcs@mail.bulkley.net</p>	<p>The Christian Counselling Centre in St. Thomas, Ont., an agency which has provided family, marriage and individual counselling in southwestern Ontario since 1990, invites applications for the position of <b>Counsellor and Executive Director</b> to begin work in May 1999. Qualifications: A Masters Degree in Social Work or its equivalent; a member in good standing in a Reformed church; willingness to travel. Please send your resume, transcripts and a one-page statement of philosophy on Christian counselling by March 31, 1999, to:</p> <p><b>Christian Counselling Centre</b> 15 St. Catharine Street St. Thomas, ON N5P 2V7 All correspondence will be kept strictly confidential.</p>	<p><b>For Rent</b></p>
<p><b>BRAMPTON, Ont.:</b> John Knox Christian School is inviting applications for openings in <b>Grade 6-8. Specialties in Phys. Ed., Science and/or Math</b> would be an asset. Please send resume, including a philosophy of Christian education to:</p> <p><b>Ms. Hilda Roukema</b> John Knox Christian School 82 McLaughlin Road S. Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7 Phone: (905) 451-3236 Fax: (905) 451-3448</p>				<p><b>Furnished House for Rent (May 1 - Oct. 1)</b> We are looking for a responsible Christian couple, who would like to rent our cozy two-bedroom bungalow with one-and-a-half bathroom, central air, large deck and SW exposure on a one acre lot in the <b>Canterbury Hills (close to Dundas and Hamilton)</b>. The rent is \$1,000. per month plus utilities. For more information phone (905) 304-6250 (not on Sundays please).</p>
<p>Our new e-mail address: <b>ccadpromo@aol.com</b></p>				<p><b>CLINTON, ONTARIO</b> <b>ADULT LIFE LEASE</b> <b>RESIDENCES</b> available 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call (519) 233-7296 or (519) 482-7862.</p>



## Classifieds

## Job Opportunities

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
VICTORIA, B.C.

Come to scenic Victoria on the beautiful West Coast and join a dynamic and enthusiastic staff in an exciting, interdenominational K-12 school system of nearly 800 students on two campuses.

## TEACHERS REQUIRED FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR:

- 2 Elementary classroom teachers (Grades 2-3 level)
- Elementary French & Music
- Elementary Learning Assistance
- Secondary French
- Elementary School Librarian (Experience and/or training preferred)
- Secondary Band and/or Choir
- Secondary Art

Teachers must be committed Christians and certifiable by the B.C. College of Teachers.

Send letter of application, resume and statement of faith to:

Bill Helmus, Elementary Principal  
Pacific Christian School  
671 Agnes Street  
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E7  
Phone: (250) 479-9365  
Fax: (250) 479-3685

John Messelink, Secondary Principal  
Pacific Christian School  
654 Agnes Street  
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6  
Phone: (250) 479-4532  
(250) 479-3511



## Miscellaneous

## EH JJ SHOW

Christian TV  
Entertainment

Times: Vision TV  
Cable Network  
Thursday mornings  
6:30 a.m. ET & PT  
7:30 a.m. MT & AT

Also CJLL-TV  
(The Miracle Channel)  
Lethbridge, Alberta  
9:30 a.m. and a repeat in evening  
Sponsored by Voortman Cookies

Web page: [www.ehjjshow.com](http://www.ehjjshow.com)



ATTENTION all women's groups, churches, schools, who need a **good fund-raising project or free speaker**. Call Grace at (905) 768-5118 or Fax: (905) 768-4318.

## Job Opportunities

## LANGLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Langley Christian Schools, an interdenominational Christian school system of 700 students, is inviting applications for the following areas:

- Elementary** - primary teacher
- Middle (7-8)** - Grade 7 generalist
- Grade 8 Math and Science
- teaching Vice-Principal responsible for curriculum and leadership
- High (9-12)** - 2 or 3 positions - any combination of: Math, Bible, French, English, Science, Business, Choral Music
- Learning Assistance position Grades 7 - 12
- possible Librarian for grades 7 - 12
- teaching Vice-Principal position

Forward applications with resumé, references and statement of faith to:

Leo Smit, Superintendent  
Langley Christian Schools  
22702 - 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Langley, B.C. V2Z 2T6

Phone: (604) 533-0839  
Fax: (604) 533-0842

## ASSOCIATE EDITOR FOR YOUTH CURRICULUM

Education, Worship & Evangelism Department  
CRC Publications

The Christian Reformed Church in North America is seeking applicants for the position of Associate Editor for Youth Curriculum for the **Education, Worship & Evangelism Department of CRC Publications**. The qualified individual must have demonstrated ability to create, edit, and rewrite instructional materials. Responsibilities include serving as primary editor and/or project manager on a variety of youth-related resources and assisting the curriculum editor in developing the pedagogical content of all materials for youth produced by CRC Publications.

A degree in education (Masters preferred) or its equivalent, with at least four years of teaching experience in a church or school setting is required.

A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, please submit a letter of interest along with your resume and a sample of your work by **April 9, 1999** to:

Director of Personnel  
CRCNA  
2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE  
Grand Rapids, MI USA 49560  
(616) 224-5881/ Fax: (616) 224-5895

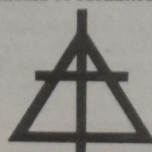
DIRECTOR  
Race Relations

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) is seeking applicants for the **Director of Race Relations**, a division of Christian Reformed Pastoral Ministries. The qualified individual will provide leadership to the congregations and agencies of the Christian Reformed Church in the areas of race relations and reconciliation. The responsibilities of the position include promoting the purpose and the ministry of Race Relations, leadership development and serving as a liaison between the Christian Reformed Church and the larger community.

A Bachelor's degree and four years of experience in community and race relations or a combination of related experience and education, as well as strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills and administrative experience are essential. Membership in the Christian Reformed Church is required.

A detailed job description of the above position is available upon request. The search process will remain open until the position is filled. For initial consideration by the search committee, please submit a copy of your resume along with a letter of interest by April 15, 1999. Nominations for this position should be submitted by April 1, 1999.

Director of Personnel  
Christian Reformed Church in North America  
2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE  
Grand Rapids, MI USA 49560

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL - ST. THOMAS, ON  
is searching for a  
TEACHING PRINCIPAL

for the school year 1999/2000. The school has a present enrolment of 126 students from 61 school families. Please send your resume, with a statement of faith and your philosophy of education to:

Principal Search Committee  
Ebenezer Christian School  
77 Fairview Avenue  
St. Thomas, ON N5R 4X7

For more information:  
Mr. B. Pasma  
(519) 631-6261 (home)  
(519) 633-0690 (school)  
e-mail: [bpasma@execulink.com](mailto:bpasma@execulink.com)

CALVIN  
College  
DIGITAL RESOURCES LIBRARIAN

The Hekman Library (<http://www.calvin.edu/library>) of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary invites nominations and applications for the position of Digital Resources Librarian. This librarian leads the team responsible for designing, implementing, and maintaining a content-rich, well-organized digital library collection. The librarian plays a primary role in determining strategic and operational direction for the management, structure, and content of the digital library. Understanding the needs of users and providing a high-quality instruction are essential components of this position. The digital Resources Librarian also is a member of the Reference and Instruction Team responsible for reference service, instruction, and liaison services to selected academic departments.

Minimum qualifications are an MLS; commitment to the Reformed (Calvinist) faith; experience in web design and page editors and other essential software packages; experience in an academic library setting; demonstrated competency with computer technology; and experience in teaching and training.

Send a cover letter, resume, and names, address, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of at least three references to:

Connie Bellows  
Director of Human Resources  
Calvin College  
3201 Burton SE  
Grand Rapids, MI USA 49546.





## Classifieds

## Job Opportunities

## PASTOR

**Houston Chr. Ref. Church** in beautiful northwest **British Columbia** is seeking a **full-time pastor** to provide sound biblical preaching, ministry to youth and pastoral care. The church membership stands at 67 families; which translates into 169 professing members and 154 non-professing or baptized members. Please send a copy of your profile. A church profile is available upon request. For more information please contact: **Rick Delau, Search Committee, Houston Chr. Ref. Church, Box 6, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0. Phone: (250) 845-7756/Fax: (250) 845-7578.**

## FULL TIME YOUTH PASTOR POSITION

Active Youth ministry looking for strong leadership for Junior, Senior, and Young Adult programs. **Consistory and parents seeking direction for young people; outreach to youth in the community a possibility; a warm and growing relationship with Jesus Christ a necessity.** Musical appreciation and ability would be an asset.

If you see yourself meeting these needs in a growing rural congregation of 100 families and have academic qualifications and/or experience to make it all happen, then we would be pleased to hear from you! Send your profile to **First CRC, 3902 Heritage Drive, Taber, AB T1G 1A2.** For a church profile or if you have any questions contact us by phone (403) 223-2331, fax (403) 223-0791, or e-mail **Pastor Mike Vandyk, mvandyk@telusplanet.net**

**The Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church**  
of Jarvis, Ont., is seeking a  
**SENIOR PASTOR**

to minister to its senior members.

If you are interested in this part-time position (approx. 10 hours per week), then please contact:  
**Mr. John Kloet (Council Chair)**  
at (519) 587-4145 or  
RR #1, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0.

**Fruitland Christian Reformed Church**  
of Stoney Creek, Ontario  
(30-minute drive from Niagara Falls) is seeking a

**FULL-TIME PASTOR**

with full responsibility for the ministry of the church, beginning May 1, 1999. We are a stable, loving congregation.

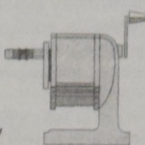
A church profile is available upon request.

Please send inquiries and resumes to:

**Jack De Gelder, 4 Brajer Court, Stoney Creek, ON L8G 4G9**  
or call Search Committee Chairman **John Bergshoeff** at (905) 945-5819.  
Church e-mail: **AK496@hwc.org**

## Bobby Lawn Care

Christian family-owned Lawn Care & Pest Control company in Stoney Creek/Hamilton area has a full-time **secretarial position** available immediately. Hourly salary starting from \$8.00 - \$10.00. The following skills are an asset: typing, computer knowledge, filing, good telephone communications and willingness to learn all the different aspects of our business. **Call (905) 643-3621 or fax resume to (905) 643-3905.**



**CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**  
Terrace, BC

**TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN**

Centennial Christian School invites applications from committed, Christian educators to fill openings for the 1999/2000 school year in the following areas:

**Intermediate Opening - Grade 5**

**Learning Assistance - Grades 4-10**

**Music - Grades 1-5 and Band - Grades 6-10**

These positions may also involve teaching duties in other areas.

Centennial Christian School is an inter-denominational school and presently offers Christian education to approximately 220 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. The addition of Grades 11 and 12 is being planned. Please send letter of application, resume and other pertinent information to:

Centennial Christian School

Frank Voogd - Principal

3608 Sparks Street

Terrace, B.C. V8G 2V6

Phone: (250) 635-6173

Fax: (250) 635-9385



## Bobby Lawn Care

Christian family-owned Lawn Care & Pest

Control Company in Stoney Creek/Hamilton

area has **several positions** available from

approximately April to November. Duties:

estimating, lawn analysis, fertilizing,

spraying, rolling, aeration, seeding, etc. Ideal

for university & college students, sem-/or retired energetic

men or women. Good driving record and own transportation.

**Call (905) 643-3621 or fax resume to (905) 643-3905.**

Each year, when the Canadian snow is mostly melted, CC publishes its annual vacation issue. This year we plan to do the same.

**So take note, providers of:**

◊ summer camps ◊ family campgrounds  
◊ travel & tourism products and packages ◊ garden supplies ◊ reading material  
◊ great places to visit ◊ games and toys ◊ places to eat ◊ camping supplies  
◊ family conferences and retreats ◊ craft and hobby materials  
◊ educational opportunities ◊ etc.

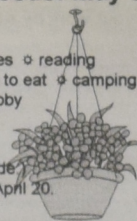
**This is the issue for your ad.**

Cost: \$14 per inch of column length. (Each column is 2" wide)

We need your text, your logo (optional), and your order by April 20.

**Call 1 (800) 969-4838 for more information.**

**1999 Vacation**  
**Issue: May 3**



## Redeemer College Art Department presents



**MATTH CUPIDO**  
**ON**  
**"TABLETALK"**

An exhibition of art  
portraying the  
passion and suffering  
of Jesus

**OPENING**

Thursday, April 1, 1999 at 8:00 p.m.

Redeemer College Art Gallery

The exhibit will run until April 17, 1999



Redeemer College

777 Garner Road E. (Hwy. 53), Ancaster, ON, L9K 1J4, (905) 648-2131, [www.redeemer.on.ca](http://www.redeemer.on.ca)

## Bed &amp; Breakfast

**Bed & Breakfast**  
**in Holland**

Book your holiday at a farm house on the beautiful island of Schouwen Duiveland, Zeeland, the Neth. Close to the Delta-works.

Pension, apartments and camping-site.

**Fam. Passchier-Boot**

**Lockershofweg 7**

**4326 SE Noordwelle**

**The Netherlands**

Ph.: 011-31-111-462398

## Personal

**ONE TO ANOTHER**

Christian companion magazine  
Hundreds of readers Canada-wide.

Single issue \$5.

Write to:

**#12 923 2nd Ave. S.**

**Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7**

**Dutch Canadian man C.R., 64 years old, likes to meet a lady between 60-65 years in south western Ontario. Send letters to File #2688, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.**

## Obituary

Holten, Ov., London  
the Neth. Ontario

June 28, 1928 - Feb. 21, 1999

We were extremely saddened by the few weeks of intense suffering and ensuing death of our beloved brother and brother-in-law,

**Wim (Bill) Beldman**

loving husband of 45 years to Mies Beldman-Vandewilde.

The youngest brother in our family of eight, Wim was predeceased by his parents Willem Beldman (1963) and Harmina Maag (1968), and by three siblings: Aaltje (1961), Derk (1994) and Gerard (1998).

We are comforted by the fearless testimony he gave us just prior to his surgery: "If I don't open my eyes here, I will open them in the presence of the Lord." We rejoice with him.

"Hij is verlost, God heeft hem wegedaan." (Ps. 116)

Wim enjoyed life, loved working with his hands, and was a fine craftsman in woodwork. With a natural disposition to humorous wit under all circumstances, he was a much loved brother and uncle among us. We will miss him.

Johanna Beldman-Heijeman  
Dunnville, Ont.

Wim Jansen, Aylmer, Ont.

Henk and Nel Beldman-Pols  
Dorchester, Ont.

Willie Beldman-Fleming, Epe,  
the Neth.

Trudy Joldersma-Beldman,  
Calgary, Alta.

Anneke Wolters-Beldman & Jan  
Wolters, Calgary, Alta.

Harmina Kobes-Beldman & Bernard  
Kobes, London, Ont.

and beloved uncle of 28 nephews and nieces.



## Events

## Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

**Mar. 11 and 12** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents *Er loopt een streepe door*. Market Centre Theatre, Woodstock, Ont., 8 p.m. Advance tickets only. Info. (519) 283-6285 (#).

**Mar. 19** Calvin College Music Department presents the Capella in concert in the Aylmer CRC, 194 South St. W., Aylmer, Ont., 7:30 p.m. Free will offering (#).

**Mar. 20** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents *Er loopt een streepe door*. Festival Theatre, Drayton, Ont., 7:30 p.m. Tickets at the theatre. Info. (519) 283-6285 (#).

**Mar. 21** Dutch Service - Rev. John Hellinga, Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53 E., Ancaster, Ont., 3:00 p.m.

**Mar. 26 and 27** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents *Er loopt een streepe door*. Dutch Canadian Hall, London, Ont., 8 p.m. Tickets at Mikes Deli. Info. (519) 283-6285 (#).

**Mar. 27** Spring Concert by the choir & band of the Ontario Christian Music Assembly under the direction of Leendert Kooij, King St. United Church, Trenton, Ont., at 8:00 p.m. Tickets: Adults \$10.00, Students \$6.00, Children under 12 - free. Call Rita Vander Molen at (613) 392-3020, or at the door, if available.

**Apr. 10** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents *Er loopt een streepe door*. Great Lakes Christian College, Beamsville, Ont., 7:30 p.m. Info. (519) 283-6285 (#).

**Apr. 10** Spring Concert by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly under the direction of Leendert Kooij, St. Thomas Anglican Church (99 Ontario St.), St. Catharines, Ont., at 8:00 p.m. Tickets: Adults \$10.00, Students \$6.00, Children under 12 - free. Call Henk Voordouw at (905) 684-8857, or at the door, if available.

**Apr. 17** Spring Concert by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly under the direction of Leendert Kooij, St. John's United Church (Victoria St. E.), Alliston, Ont., at 8:00 p.m. Tickets: Adults \$10.00, Students \$6.00, Children under 12 - free. Call (705) 435-6522, or at the door, if available.

**Apr. 24** Ancaster CRC presents *Celebration of Music* featuring the choir, soloist, organ and piano duets, a youth brass ensemble plus audience participation. Ancaster CRC on Hwy. 53 E. in Ancaster, Ont. 8:00 p.m. Free will offering. Info. (905) 648-2323.

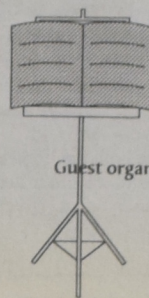
**May 2** Dutch Service - Rev. Ralph Koops, Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53 E., Ancaster, Ont., 3:00 p.m.

## SOLI DEO GLORIA



Ebenezer CRC of Trenton, Ont. will celebrate 50 years of ministry on DV April 11, 1999. We are thankfully remembering the Lord's blessings with a variety evening on April 10, 1999 at Creek Side, Brighton, Ont., 7:30 p.m. Thanksgiving services on April 11, at 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. All former pastors, friends and members are

invited to celebrate with us. For more information call: (613) 394-5046 or (613) 392-5173.



The Brampton/Georgetown Christian Male choir, **THE CHORALERS**,

will give their annual concert, D.V., March 26, 1999, in the Burlington CRC, New Street, and March 27, 1999, in the Second CRC, Brampton.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Guest organist Christopher Dawes and soloist Charlene Flikkema.

Tickets are \$10 each.

Advance tickets available from

George Ter Steege, President, at (905) 822-0531 or Heno Hennevel, Secretary, at (905) 793-6158, or any member of the choir.

**You are cordially invited!**



## Spring Concerts of Praise

by the  
Choirs, concert band & Kooij Sisters  
of the

**Ontario Christian Music Assembly**  
under the direction of **Leendert Kooij**  
with **Andre Knevel** at the organ

**ADMISSION:** Adults \$10.00 Students \$6.00  
Children under 12 - FREE

**March 27**  
King St. United  
TRENTON  
(613) 392-5274

**April 10**  
St. Thomas Anglican  
ST. CATHARINES  
(905) 684-8857

**April 17**  
St. John's United  
ALLISTON  
(705) 435-6522

For all concerts call OCMA Toronto (416) 636-9779

Don't miss this inspiring evening of praise for the whole family!

## MUSIC FOR LENT

Saturday March 27, 1999 8:00 p.m.  
Church of Our Lady  
28 Norfolk St. Guelph, Ont.

**Penderecki String Quartet**  
(one of the most celebrated chamber ensembles in the music world)

& **Tactus Vocal Ensemble**

(musical emphasis is founded in the Renaissance with the intention to perform a cappella repertoire)

**Repertoire includes:**

'Seven Last Words' ..... J. Haydn  
Ave Verum Corpus ..... W. Mozart  
Also music from Weelkes, Saunders,  
Byrd and Morley

**Tickets:** \$20 - Adults

\$10 - Youth under 20 years

**To reserve:** call Geraldine

Ysselstein at (519) 763-7528.

Tickets also available at the door.

This concert is produced by Peter Ysselstein.



Come and join  
your sisters in  
the CRC for a  
day of  
learning and  
exploration of  
the changing

seasons and spiritual journey of  
our lives as women

## CHANGING SEASONS: A WOMAN'S JOURNEY

Saturday, April 17, 1999  
9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Waterloo CRC

**Keynote Speaker**  
Lucy Van Wyk,  
Social Worker, Toronto

**Worship Leader**  
Rev. Amanda Benckhuysen,  
Ann Arbor CRC

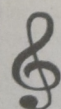
**Story-teller**  
Dorothy Bowman

**Panel Discussion**  
a conversation among  
four women at different  
life stages

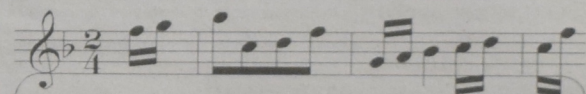
Registration: \$45.00  
Deadline: March 31, 1999

Due to space restrictions,  
registration will be limited  
to the first 200 participants.

Contact Helen Van Dyk  
(519) 576-6035 or  
bvandyk@sentex.net



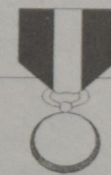
The Calvin College Music Department presents the  
Capella in concert Friday, March 19, 7:30 p.m.  
at the Christian Reformed Church in Aylmer  
(194 South Street W.) Free will offering.



## THE BRITISH COLUMBIA BOYS CHOIR

will present a spectacular performance  
and will showcase some of British Columbia's  
most talented young musicians,  
under the direction of Gerald Van Wyck, on  
Monday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m.  
in Community Church of Richmond Hill,  
45 Crosby Avenue.

Tickets are \$15.00/person and are available by  
calling the church office at 905-884-3005, ext. 21.



The British Columbia Boys Choir was founded in 1968 and has won international acclaim throughout Canada, the Netherlands, Russia, United States, Europe, The Czech Republic, Australia and New Zealand. It is a four-part, non-liturgical boys choir, one of the few such choirs in North America. The Choir has made radio and television appearances, produced over 20 recordings and have appeared in television commercials and shows in addition to recording sound-tracks for films. Its present conductor, Mr. Gerald Van Wyck, is well known in Toronto for his direction of the North York Philharmonic Choir and as Music Director of Leaside United Church. This March 15th performance will be their only performance in the Greater Toronto Area. It will be an evening you will not soon forget. Plan now to attend.



## News

# Unique Christian opera company surges ahead

Stephen VanHelden

CALGARY, Alta. — This year in Calgary, Alberta, may be remembered for "the little opera company that could," as the Calgary-based Arena dell Opera moves into its second year with hopes of improving and building on its successes of last year.

Last October, 300 people rose to their feet at the Jack Singer Hall and gave Arena dell Opera's little-known performers a rousing ovation for their performance of *Sukkot: Feast of Tabernacles*.

Founded by musician Jefa Alexandra Penkava, who is also president of the company, Arena dell Opera presented *Sukkot: Feast of Tabernacles* to honor the 50th anniversary of the nation of Israel. (*Sukkot* means tent, referring to the fruit harvest or "in gathering," a celebration of God protecting the Israelites during their wilderness wanderings.) The opera will be performed again this year, Penkava hopes, to a sold-out

audience in the 1600-seat Jack Singer Hall.

## Lives are changed

Penkava, who plays both David's wife Abigail and Queen Esther, believes that *Sukkot* is important because it has "eternal value." "Eternal value [means] the gospel is going forward to touch the hearts of believers and non-believers. The performance has an impact on both. People are being affected by this, their lives are being changed for the better," explains Penkava.

"We have to do things that transform others and ourselves. People who had never even heard opera came and said, 'If this is opera, I love it.'" She said the music causes people's spirits to be lifted up. "It encourages and reaches down to the deepest spirit of your soul and moves you," she said.

Penkava wrote both the libretto (text) and music of the four-act, two-and-a-half-hour opera, which

focuses on deliverance and salvation. The opera includes both an adult and children's chorus and main characters such as Moses, Miriam and King David. Last year there were 24 on-stage performers; this year Penkava is hoping for 40. She added that men are especially needed for the performance.

## A unique experience

Ingjerd Viken attended the performance and described it as powerful. A member of Christ Alive International Ministries Church in Calgary, Viken said the performance is hard to compare to other operas she has seen. "It touches you, it's very different but beautiful, especially the music, it ministers to Christians and non-Christians," she said.

The uniqueness of the Arena dell Opera is something that both Penkava and executive director Linda Linton find exciting, as the company is a pioneer in biblical opera. "We aren't competing with

anybody, we have a very unique spot," said Linton. "We are a new professional opera company. The music is so different than anyone has heard before, we received a standing ovation the first time out." She said it was encouraging as many of the 300 people stayed an hour after the performance to find out more about the Arena dell Opera.

Penkava also notes that there's been a recent surge in the popularity of classical music and opera. "In the last five years alone there has been a 40 per cent increase in the sales of classical music and opera in Canada alone," she says.

Penkava challenges Christians to become involved in the performing arts.

The web address is [www.arenadelopera.com](http://www.arenadelopera.com).

## Surprise in Boesak trial

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — In the trial of Allan Boesak for fraud, his bookkeeper unexpectedly apologized for allegations of fraud against Boesak. Boesak is a former minister of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, and was a leading anti-apartheid activist in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The bookkeeper, Freddie Steenkamp, is serving a six-year conviction for his own fraud. At his own trial, Steenkamp had charged that Boesak regularly took money, and that is why he, Steenkamp, tried to take some as well.

At Boesak's trial, Steenkamp has withdrawn most of those charges and apologized for the damage to Boesak he has caused. Nevertheless, he did not withdraw the charge that Boesak was involved in some fund transfer, and said Boesak knew of at least two improper loans that Steenkamp took out.

The prosecution alleges that about 259,161 Rand (about \$45,000 US) is missing from a Children's Fund of which Boesak was in charge.

## News Digest

### Richler reluctantly agrees

TORONTO — No one can recall surlily satirist Mordecai Richler ever teaching a creative writing course, but the famous Canadian author will indeed be featured in that role this summer at Toronto's Humber College, reports the *Toronto Star*. Joe Kertes, director of Humber's School for Writers, wrote Richler five years ago, inviting him to teach. In return, he received a postcard with Richler's biting comments on writing schools: young people who want to become writers would do better to go out and sell shoes.

But when Richler was in Toronto last fall to read in Humber's "Distinguished Speakers" series, Kertes reminded him of the postcard. "I told him that I always read this card to students at the start of the writing program. He seemed interested."

In the end, he said he'd come.

### Atheist's Bible auctioned

(religiontoday.com) — A Bible was among the possessions of atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair auctioned by the IRS. The agency seized O'Hair's personal belongings to pay back taxes after she disappeared four years ago, the Associated Press said. "There is some irony in that Bible," said Austin lawyer Jimmy Nassour, who paid \$2,000 for it. "I was willing to go up to \$500, but I got caught up in the moment." The Bible was presented by Oklahoma schoolchildren to the prominent atheist, whose lawsuit resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court decision removing mandated prayer from public schools.

### Tourists' dumb questions

TORONTO — Travellers can ask the strangest things, according to *Toronto Star* writer Bill Taylor. For instance, one woman asked for an aisle seat on a plane so her hair wouldn't be mussed up by being near the window. Another traveller inquiring about a package trip to Hawaii asked: "Would it be cheaper to fly to California and then take the train?"

One travel agency had a call from a customer furious about his package trip to Orlando. "He said he was expecting an ocean-view room," says the agent. "I tried to explain that's not possible, since Orlando is in the middle of the state. He replied, 'Don't lie to me. I looked on a map and Florida is a very thin state.'"

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